



Bulletin

Igud Yotzei Sin

Association of Former Residents of China

November-December 2011 ♦ Vol 58 ♦ Issue No. 406 English Supplement

1951 - 2011
60 Years
Igud Yotzei Sin



1961 - 2011

50 YEARS

Synagogue

31 HaGolan Street, Tel Aviv

In Memory of the Jewish Communities in China

Donation Ceremony of the Tientsin Photo Exhibition to the Diaspora Museum

Tel Aviv November 2011



L-R: Daniel Ben Simon; T. Kaufman; Mr. Xiao Huaiyuan & Amb. Gao Yanping



Ambassador Gao Yanping



L-R: Varda Priver; T. Kaufman; Daniel Friedman (Tientsin)



Yossi Jacobsen (Tientsin)



L-R: Former residents of Tientsin with Miss Anna Song



Gad Ben-Ari Senior Adviser - Board of Directors Diaspora Museum

CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF IGUD YOTZEI SIN

T. KAUFMAN

Hanukkah is fast approaching and during the holiday we shall be gathering not only for our traditional gathering and the scholarships award ceremony but to celebrate 60 years to the founding of the Association of Former Residents of China in Israel [Igud Yotzei Sin].

60 years have passed since that day in 1951 at Palatine Café in Tel Aviv, a step away from Ponve House where a group of friends gathered, all of whom were ex-pats from Shanghai, Harbin, Tianjin and Dairen [Dalian at present], and decided to establish an association of China's ex-pats. Today, even though the association is 60 years old, it continues to operate a most productive community programme.

Igud Yotzei Sin - 'The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel' has set out to unite China's ex-pats originating from various cities in China including members of Russian-Jewish origins, members of the Sephardic community of Shanghai and Jewish immigrants from central Europe who found shelter in Shanghai. The overall agenda of the association has remained unchanged throughout those 60 years - providing social welfare to those of the ex-pats in need, supporting the young generation by way of awarding academic scholarships to those attending higher education institutes in Israel and the care and preservation of our past in China by publishing "Bulletin" the association's periodical as well as books about the history of the Jews in China and the conservation of all memorial monuments relating to the various periods of Jewish presence in

China. All of these aims have been achieved and remain amongst the chief concerns of the association.

At present, the association provided welfare to 60 of China's ex-pats. Not long ago this number stood at 150. The sums involved are by no means insignificant and total some \$80,000 per annum.

In the past, academic scholarships were awarded to China's ex-pats and to their children. Today, it is the turn of the grandchildren as well as great-grandchildren to receive these awards. Throughout the years some 4,000 scholarships have been awarded, on average about 150 a year totalling some \$80,000.

Our efforts in preserving our heritage in China bore fruit in the form of the Museum of Jewish History in both Harbin and Shanghai and the conservation of the Jewish cemetery in Harbin, the only one to have survived in the whole of China.

The unity of China's ex-pats is a major factor in the operation of our centre at Ponve House where the secretariat of Igud Yotzei Sin is located as well as our archives. It is where our "Bulletin" is published and our website maintained, all playing a major part in the preservation of our history in China.

All of these activities and programmes are run by a dynamic group of the association's members working tirelessly for the benefit of all former residents of China in Israel.

No one, including the writer of this piece, had imagined that we would still be here doing this work 60 years later but one does not argue with the facts. Igud Yotzei Sin has been operating for 60 years and will

continue and be active aided by the generous support of our friends in Israel and abroad.

Well done dear friends! To the next 60 years!

GREETING TO CHINA'S NEW AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL

Mme. Gao Yanping, the newly appointed Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the State of Israel, presented her Letter of Credence to Israel's President Shimon Peres and commenced her mission.

Mme. Gao Yanping is an experienced diplomat who holds a PhD in Law. Prior to her arrival in Israel she held some key positions in the ministry of foreign affairs in China and in many Chinese Institutions outside her country. Mme. Gao Yanping is a most erudite, sympathetic and gregarious lady.

We would like to extend our most warm welcome to Mme. Gao and wish her success in all of her endeavours and diplomatic responsibilities in Israel.

HAPPY HANUKKAH!

The next issue of the "Bulletin of Igud Yotzei Sin" will be published in Pessach, the festival celebrating the victory of the Jewish spirit and of heroism, a festival commemorating faith overcoming might.

Igud Yotzei Sin has made Hanukkah its own for many years now. During that week our members annually gather for their grand meeting and award academic scholarships to the younger generation of China's ex-pats.

Happy Hanukkah dear friends!

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THE IYS BULLETIN (Russian, English, Hebrew), (approximately 250 pages per issue), all aspects of Jewish Communities of China, historical memories, book reviews, archival information, current lives of individual Jews (China expatriates) worldwide. Continuous Publication since 1954

*"The aim of the Association is to organize the former residents from the Far East for the purpose of mutual assistance and cooperation."
(from the by-laws of the Association)*

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In publishing the Bulletin the IYS in Israel aims to meet the following needs:

1. To promote a sense of community among the former Jewish residents in China.
2. To maintain a channel of communication for the members of the above community.

3. To assist in collecting, preserving and publishing historical materials dealing with the life of the above community.
4. To assist IYS in meeting its goals, particularly those dealing with social assistance and educational stipends to members of the above community living in Israel.

THE LEADERSHIP OF IGUD YOTZEI SIN IN ISRAEL AND THE JEWISH FAR-EASTERN SOCIETIES IN THE DIASPORA

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People and Events

OUR TRADITIONAL HANUKKAH GATHERING

The traditional Hanukkah gathering of Igud Yotzei Sin and the scholarships' award ceremony will take place on Tuesday the 27th of December 2011, on the eighth candle of Hanukkah at 17:00 at Einav Centre in Tel Aviv - 71, Ibn Gvirol Street, Gan Ha'Ir.

REPRESENTATIVES OF IsraAID AT PONVE HOUSE

Members of IsraAID, the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid visited Ponve House on August the 22nd. Their role is to coordinate between the various Jewish organisations and other NGOs who maintain commercial links with Israel and play a central role in offering humanitarian aid.

The guests included Shachar Zehavi, IsraAID's director, Y. Pulitzer, G. Nator and Yoni Gleek, a member of the management team; they all met with T. Kaufman and R. Veinerman. The conversation revolved around providing agricultural and medical aid to the weakest regions in China. Igud Yotzei Sin will facilitate IsraAID thanks to its long established links with various organisations in China and especially in the Heilongjiang province of which Harbin is the capital city.

ELEONORA HARIZMAN AT PONVE HOUSE

On September the 4th, Eleonora Harizman, a journalist with the Russian language "Novosti Nedeli" [Weekly News] visited Ponve House and met with T. Kaufman. Mrs. Harizman was there to gather information relating to Isaac, a member of her family, who was the owners of the circus in Harbin in the early part of the 20th century. She was also seeking information

regarding Dr. T.N. Peshkovsky.

SHANGHAI'S HONGKOU DISTRICT

Two students from the Tel Aviv University, Ely Sofrin and Erez Grove have been carrying out conservation and reconstruction work in Shanghai Hongkou district where many a refugee from central Europe has sheltered during the Second World War.

T Kaufman has pledged cooperation with this restoration project on behalf of Igud Yotzei Sin and the China-Israel Friendship Society.

COMPREHENSIVE RENOVATION AT PONVE HOUSE

Extensive renovation works took place during September and October 2011 at Ponve House which houses the club and the secretariat offices of Igud Yotzei Sin [13 Gruzenberg Street Tel Aviv]. The principal share of the works including the professional and supervisory aspects of the job were carried out by our friend from Harbin and member of the management team of Igud Yotzei Sin, Raphi Rashinsky and the successful completion of the project is entirely owed to him.

IN GRATITUDE

We are indebted to our friends, originally from China some of whom live in Israel and others who reside abroad. We thank you for your generous contributions to Igud Yotzei Sin. It is thanks to all of them and in particular to these seven individuals that we are able to continue with our work:

Asya Kogan [Tokyo] - \$ 136,000.

The Milia Memorial Fund [San Francisco] - \$ 30,000.

The Ethel Dunn Memorial Fund [New York] - \$ 21,000.

Ilana and Giora Lesk [Israel] - NIS 40,000.

Billy Belokamen [Los Angeles] - \$ 7,000.

David Familiant [Monaco] - \$ 5,000

Harry Trigobov [Sydney] - Aus. \$ 7,000.

A MEMORIAL STIPEND IN THE NAME OF LEAH AND MILI TANDET

Miriam Yakir [née Tandet] and her brother Arie Tandet have set up a scholarship fund in memory of their parents Leah and Shmuel [Mili] Tandet. The stipend will be awarded during our traditional Hanukkah evening on the 27th of December 2011.

THE NEXT "BULLETIN"

The next Bulletin [number 407] will be published on the 20th of March 2012 in close proximity to Seder Night [April 6]. Greeting messages and editorial material must be submitted by the 10th of February 2012.

T. KAUFMAN'S LECTURE IN HAIFA

"The Jews of China" - a lecture by T. Kaufman.

Monday, the 9th of January 2012 at 19:15.

At "Ahuzat Bnai Brith", 20/22 Horev Street Haifa.

LOOKING FOR INFORMATION

In Tianjin China, a young man named Dudik Lev lived with his wife Yelena Verdfoker.

In the autumn of 1947 they emigrated full stop after USSR.

Anyone out there who might have any information regarding the whereabouts or fate of Dudik Lev, please contact the secretariat at Igud Yotzei Sin.

MAZAL TOV!

JOYFUL NEWS FOR THE AYA MACHLINA AND RAY PIVO'S FAMILY

On the 25th of March 2011, another grand-daughter was born to Aya Machlina and to Ray Pivo. Her name is Ahuvah Rachel. The baby's parents, Dr. Jonathan and Gittle Paul Pivo are already the proud parents of two daughters and two adult sons. Igud Yotzei Sin would like to extend our best wishes to Aya and the rest of the Pivo family on the birth of their

grand-daughter - health, happiness and success.

A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

Sarah Ross is 96

Our friend from Harbin and Shanghai, Sarah Ross, one of the more senior of China's ex-pats is celebrating her 96th birthday. We wholeheartedly wish her health, and longevity - looking forward to your 120th!

Avi [Seva] Podolsky is 75

Our friend from Harbin, Avi [Seva]

Podolsky has turned 75 in October. Throughout the years, Seva, an active member of the management team of Igud Yotzei Sin has also represented our organisation in Jerusalem and the southern region of Israel. He is also a member of the director's team at the China-Israel Friendship Society. We extend our warm felicitations to Seva and wish him and Natasha and the whole family health, happiness and success! - Looking forward to your 120th!

Letters

October 2nd 2011

Hello Mr. Piastunovich

I apologize for the e-mail in Chinese. I thought it would be a good idea to write it in Chinese, but I did not anticipate that doing so would be inconvenient for you.

In any case, my name is Suzanne Arian. I am an American serving as a volunteer English teacher in Lod, outside of Tel Aviv. I just recently earned my bachelor's degree in International Relations with a minor in Mandarin Chinese, and I studied for 6 months in Beijing during my college career.

I am writing because I would really like to meet other people in Israel who have an affinity for and an interest in China. I would also like to meet Chinese people living in Israel.

If your organization organizes activities or parties, I would really like to participate, if possible. I am also very interested in finding someone else who speaks Chinese and who would like to practice speaking with me. In addition, I am looking for other ways to get involved in the community here.

I have only been here for one month so far, but I will be here for ten months at least, and I would love to serve as a volunteer with your organization if there is any need for that. I especially have experience in organizing social events, marketing, and doing office work.

Thank you very much for your help in these matters,
Best regards.

Suzanne Arian

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INVITATION

The Board of Directors of Igud Yotzei Sin,
The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel, And the Israel-China Friendship Society

**Are honored to invite you to the traditional Chanukah
Reunion of Former Residents of China and the ceremony for the
presentation of scholarships to students.**

On Tuesday, 27 December 2011

At Mercaz Einav (Gan Ha'ir rooftop) 71 Ibn Gvirol Street, Tel Aviv. Doors will open at 5 PM for start of the reunion. Light refreshments will be served. Doors will close at 6 PM to begin the ceremony.



To the **MISHA KOGAN**
Scholarship Fund
US\$ 35,000

In memory of my dear parents
and in memory of the dear
parents of Misha Kogan

ASYA KOGAN (TOKYO)
December 2011



Kalman Kogan



Abram Kachanovsky



Riva Kogan



Tatyana Kachanovsky

Letters

August 22, 2011

To: Igud Sin

From: Akiva JindDavid International Ltd.

**GS Bldg 7F Tsuruya-cho, Kanagawa-ku
Yokohama-Shi, Kanagawa-ken, 221-0835, Japan**

Fax: 81-45-313-6546

Email: sales@davidinter.co.jp

Subject: Dr. Kaufman z"l

Dear Mr.Theodore Kaufman

Shalom,

My name is Akiva Jindo, Chairman of the Japan-Israel Friendship Association (JIFA) and a member of Makuya Zionist Movement in Japan.

I was given your mail address by Ms. Izumi Sato who is also a board member of JIFA.

Next year marks 60 Years of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Israel and we are thinking of sending a delegation to Israel. The State of Israel was the first country in the world that extended her offer to open diplomatic relations with Japan soon after it resumed its sovereignty in May 1952.

There seems to be many reasons for the favorite views of the Israeli and Jewish people toward Japan, stemming from the long time friendly relationship between the Jewish people and the Japanese. One of the reasons, we believe, is the active role that Dr. Avraham Kaufman z"l played in the 1930-40's in Harbin.

The Jewish survivors of the Sugihara visas are well known, but I have been trying to grasp the whole Jewish-Japanese relationship in this period.

I would very much like to hear about the important role of Dr. Kaufman and the Jewish communities in Manchuria. Is there something that has been published on this subject?

I occasionally come to Israel and next time I would like to visit you and hear from you.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

Akiva Jindo

Mobile phone in Japan: 81-90-3662-9112

August 27, 2011

From: Akiva Jindo

To: Teddy Kaufman

Subject: Thank you

Dear Mr. Kaufman,

I just received your parcel and was excited to learn of your activities in Igud Yotsei Sin. Also thank you for your book, "The Jews of Harbin Live on in My Heart". I am anxious to read it.

Yesterday I visited the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and checked how the diplomatic relationship between Israel and Japan was formed in 1952. I was fascinated to find out that it was Israel who approached first. Foreign Minister, Mr. Moshe Sharett chose Japan as the most influential democratic nation in Asia and extended his proposal to form a strong diplomatic and economic tie. Japan considered this proposal carefully, because of the financial difficulty to open its consulate in Israel, and finally on 15 May 1952, both countries exchanged agreements. I am so grateful that the leaders of the newly born State of Israel initiated this important relationship 60 years ago.

Certainly there must have been strong oppositions in Israel due to the fact that Japan was allied with Nazi Germany. But there was a long history of mutual cooperation between the Japanese people and the Jewish people before WWII.

I would be most obliged if you could assist in this ambitious endeavor.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

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Jewish Communities in Asia

CHINA - Beijing

Chabad House and Community Centre

Fang Yan Xi Lu, next to the south gate of Si De Park

Beijing, PR China

Tel: (8610) 8470 8238 ext. 210, (86) 13910740109

www.chabadbeijing.com

Chabad of Yao Bao Lu: Jian Guo Men Diplomatic Bldg, Building 3, 2/F 223 Chaoyangmennei Street, Beijing, PR China

Tel: (86) 1352 2016 427 Email: rabbaimendy08@gmail.com

Kehilat Beijing (Reform): Capital Club Athletic Center, 3/F, Ballroom

Capital Mansion, 6 Xinyuan Nanlu Chaoyang District Beijing PR China

Tel: (86) 10 6467 2225 www.sinogogue.org

Guangzhou

Guangzhou Chabad: 31 He Ping Lu, Overseas Village, Guangzhou, China

Tel: (86) 137 1959 5049 www.chabadgz.org

Shanghai

Shanghai Chabad (Shanghai Jewish Center): Shang-Mira Garden Villa #1

1720 Hong Qiao Road, Shanghai, 200336 PR China

Tel: (86) 21 6278 0225 www.chinajewish.org

Chabad of Pudong: Vila #69, 2255 Luoshan Road, Shanghai, 200135, PR China

Tel: (86) 21 5878 2008 www.chinajewish.org

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Chabad of Hong Kong: 1/F Hoover Court, 7-9 Macdonell Road

Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2523 9770 www.chabadhk.org

Ohel Leah Synagogue: 70 Robnson Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2589 2621 www.ohelleah.org

United Jewish Congregation (Reform): Jewish Community Centre

One Robnson Place, 70 Robnson Road

Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2523 2985 www.ujc.org.hk

Shuva Israel (Orthodox): 2/F Fortune House, 61 Connaught Road;

Central Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2851 6300 www.shuva-israel.com

Kowloon

Kehilat Zion (Orthodox): Unit 105, 1/F, Wing on Plaza, 62 Mody Road,

Tsim Sha Tsui East, Kowloon

Tel: (852) 2368 0061 www.kehilat-zion.org

Chabad of Kowloon: 11 Hart Avenue, 2/F, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon

Tel: (852) 2366 5770

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Magen David Synagogue: 340 Sir J.J. Rd, Byculla, Mumbai

Tel: (91) 22 2300 6675

Keneseth Eliyahu Synagogue: 43 Fr. V.B. Gandhi Marg, Fort, Mumbai

Tel: (91) 22 2283 1502 / 2283 9617

Kurla Bene Israel: 275 C.S.T. Rd, Jewish Colony, Kurla (W), Mumbai, India

JAPAN - Kobe

Ohel Shelomoh Synagogue and Community Center: 4-12-12, Kitano-cho

Chuo-ku, Kobe 650, Japan

Tel: (81) 78 221 7236 www.jacckobe.org

Tokyo

Tokyo Chabad: 1-5-23 Takanawa, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan 108-0073

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JCC Japan (Reform): Tokyo Jewish Community Centre, 8-8 Hiroo 3-Chome

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BULLETIN

A RUSSIAN SPEAKING BILLIONAIRE

by Miriam Gurov (translated from Russian)

Harry Oscar Triguboff - an Australian billionaire, a Jewish émigré of Russian descent, really likes to speak Russian; and not only with journalists. He confessed that when he was involved, very successfully, in the construction business in Israel, he conducted it all in Russian.

Imagine, I arrived at the offices of the mayor of Ra'anana to discuss various business issues and noticed his deputy's heavy Russian accent. We struck up a conversation and it turned out he is a Russian immigrant. At that time there were not many immigrants from Russia around and so we sat down with my assistants at his office in Ra'anana and conducted my Australian business, in Israel, in the Russian language! I was building some 110 new apartments in Ra'anana at the time.

Public housing?

No, private sector, standard apartments. Many in Israel were on the verge of bankruptcy during that period yet I profited big time.

But how?

Well that's just me - Harry expands at length - an expert! The times were interesting. If I bought a plot of land I could have sold it a week later for double the profit. Yet I made a decision; I came to Israel not as a speculator but as a Zionist! I wanted to build homes for the Jews. And here's an interesting tit bit; all of those land speculators went bankrupt. I was building quietly and I made big profits.

Has the local bureaucracy interfered much in your affairs?

At the time, bureaucracies all over the globe were less strict. Now the situation is becoming increasingly more difficult. There are so many requirements! How much light should an apartment enjoy, what should the noise levels be and what lies beneath

the soil. Back then we did not give much thought to these issues, we just built and that was that. Though it does now seem that setting requirements is the right thing to do, it does benefit the people.

Would you not agree with me that the chance of having coffee with a live billionaire is not your everyday occurrence. The meeting with Triguboff was set in motion by Professor Benjamin Ish-Shalom, rector of the Centre for Advanced Jewish Studies.

Triguboff, says Ish-Shalom, is one of Australia's richest men. He founded and established "Meriton", one of the largest construction companies in the world, a building empire providing mostly residential apartments. Mr Triguboff is in Israel in order to make a substantial donation to our research centre "Shorashim" [Roots].

"Vesti", a Russian language periodical has already informed its readers about this new centre where Russian speaking immigrants are assisted in finding official papers and documents attesting to their Jewishness. I would like to briefly mention the work carried out by Rabbi Shimon Har-Shalom and other rabbis thanks to whom several hundred couples were able to get married in Israel in a traditional Jewish ceremony. Obtaining such documents often means the rabbis working at "Shorashim" have to make their way to remote corners of the former USSR where, there is no denying, the documents must be 'purchased' from the archive clerks at the local Population Registry Bureau. These missions would not exist but for the financial support of Harry Oscar Triguboff.

Our meeting took place at the cafeteria of the Knesset [Israel's parliament]. I have been warned that this billionaire

is 78 years old. I scanned the faces of those present looking for an elderly gentleman. And there he is, this Australian business man, descending the stairs gingerly accompanied by his wife. He smiles, sports a full head of silver hair, wearing a plain shirt and a piercing stare. The conversations flows and at times switches into Hebrew sans foreign accent with jokes a plenty. Captivating and all the while leading the direction in which the conversation goes he begins with Ra'anana back in the 70's.

Getting a question in edgeways is not easy:

Are you currently planning any residential projects in Israel?

No, that time in Ra'anana was the first and last time.

Why?

I live and build in Sydney and a little on the Gold Coast and in Queensland, close enough to my quarters. I don't even build in Melbourne as I have grown accustomed to doing everything myself. Supervising the lot, following the construction process and being in touch with my workforce. Now how could I possibly do that in Israel? Whilst on a flight?

From a distance, how do you view the conundrum of the property market in Israel? Are you at all aware of the situation here?

It seems to me that the Israeli bureaucracy got carried away with the rich elite's property boom; rich Jews coming from abroad wishing to invest in apartments in Israel and to turn a quick profit. Apparently the planners forgot the ordinary folk. At present, both in the USA as well as in Europe, business is in a bad place. The developers find it difficult to sell the luxury projects. Currently it is advisable to direct projects toward the ordinary folk. The developer needs to

work with the banks, explain to them that they should not shy away from offering mortgages to people as rent here is very steep.

What about the cost of rented accommodation?

Yes, that is the reason people want to buy flats and not rent. There is no need to be overly concerned about giving people mortgages. Where would they otherwise go? Renting is expensive yet people do need to live somewhere! There is no need to build palaces for the elite. A man needs a roof over his head so he can live with dignity. Even back then, in Ra'anana and always in Australia, I have built ordinary flats for the middle classes and for young couples. Nevertheless, I've built in areas where the demand existed and I made a lot of money that way. Here there is another problem as the developers are not permitted to buy land for public housing and a variety of bureaucratic hurdles are set up for them. I am convinced that one should own the land to be built on yet here the bureaucrats insist developers stop building and sell the land and make a profit. I do not like this idea. In time they will understand that it is the wrong way of going about this issue.

Are you in possession of any further business principles? What advice would you offer officialdom as well as business men?

Firstly, I trust no one. I do however have full confidence in myself and I do not depend on anyone else. Secondly, one must recognise one's own propensities and aptitudes and have a grasp of those from early on in life. Thirdly, a business man has to be honest. First of all, honest with himself; and to constantly have faith in the success of his enterprise, always and anywhere. It makes no difference what country you reside in - these principles always work.

Do you still have rules and principles for business management? What advice would you give a young man taking his first business steps?

Firstly, I trust no one. I am very sure of

myself and depend on no other person. Secondly, one should understand one's inclination and capabilities and develop this understanding early on. Thirdly, one should always be honest with oneself. One should not fill one's head with a variety of silly ideas and always have faith in your ability to succeed! Always and anywhere. No matter what country you're in - it works everywhere.

What principles of your Jewish-Russian upbringing did you bring with you which seem to have best served you? After all, you were born in Russia.

Oh! No way! I was born in China.

???

My parents were born in Russia. My father, Moshe, came from a small place somewhere near Kiev. My mother came from Siberia, her name was Frieda. When still a young man my father was looking for a better source of income and so joined his relatives in Harbin. En route he met and fell in love with the woman who would be my mother. Together they arrived at my uncle's who worked on the construction of the Eastern China Railway. The times were hard for my father and so they moved to Dairen where I was born. It was a Russian town not far from Port Arthur where Russian ships would dock at the port. Father spoke no other language - neither Chinese nor English and on the whole he had no proper education. But, my uncle's relatives fought in the First World War, one of them was stationed in Port Arthur, spoke several languages, remained in China and did very well as a business man. He helped all of his relatives. We had a very large family over there. My childhood was spent in Tianjin, not far from Beijing. The town had a large Russian-Jewish community and it was there that my father began his cotton manufacturing business and became very successful. I had many friends there. Our mothers could only speak Russian, our fathers, at first, spoke some English.

Do your children speak Russian?

Unfortunately no. I have two adult daughters - Orna and Sharon.

How did you arrive in Australia?

At the end of the Second World War hard times fell on China. At first we thought of going back to the USSR. At the railway station we were informed that our baggage was too large and they began removing items. We were quite simply, robbed. They promised we could settle anywhere we'd choose but then it turned out Siberia was the only permitted destination! We were lucky; they were urgently looking for translators. My father could speak English by then and so did I; and so he got a good job and we did not make it to the gulag. At the time everyone was trying to obtain travel visas for Palestine. En route, several people had second thoughts and as getting to America was difficult and the demand for travel to Australia was low, I had the opportunity to go to Australia. My father did not get the certificate and so left for Israel. That was in 1947.

And it was in Australia that you became a business man?

At first I was in the cotton business in Israel. My father has a factory here. He was "חרושתן" [manufacturer, archaic], are you familiar with this word?

Seems like "בית חרושת" [factory] - that's what they called in Israel back in the 50's; the word is no longer in use.

True. They don't. And so, I finished school and graduated from college in Australia when my father invited me and my brother to join him. At first all three of us worked at the factory in Beit Dagan and later I established a branch, a factory in Or Akiva and I succeeded! Yet there was a problem with my brother. He could just neither acclimatise nor learn any Hebrew. He dreamt of going back to Australia and asked me to join him; but I knew I had more to learn. My father sent me to England where I gained a degree in textile engineering from Leeds University. For a year I worked in South Africa and then I joined my

brother in Australia. I did not succeed in the textile industry. I noted that the machinery was ancient, the markets limited and the workforce expensive. In South Africa I actually worked as an accountant for a textile millionaire and did learn a lot from him. As for myself, there was one thing I understood to be of great importance: I do understand numbers, the specific subject I studied at university was of no relevance; it's just that I know how to make money. I began looking around considering what I could do next. Father did not give me much money. Only enough to build a house. And so I set out to build my own house. I hired an engineer to supervise the project and I watched him: he was a drunken idler!

Are there many drunkards in Australia?

And how! I watched them; time passed by and yet there was no discernable progress in the construction process. I sent him on his way and supervised the building works myself.

It has always been like that. I run into a problem and always think up ways of sorting it out. And so it was throughout my life - always learning anew how to overcome difficulties. I've been lucky with my employees; while they were busy building I studied the construction business in depth. I recognised that I was finding the whole subject very interesting. "Wow" I thought to myself "I have just turned myself into a builder!" my house wasn't even finished when I purchased a number of small plots, nearby, so I could supervise the work. At present my company employs excellent builders, all very conscientious. The main thing though is that at the time, in Australia, only small houses, one or two stories tall were being built. There wasn't a market for flats. As I have lived in other countries in my past, in China and Israel, I was used to multi-story buildings containing a large number of apartments. My understanding was that that was the way forward in residential housing. I built multi

apartment buildings on small plots! I was the first one in Australia to build like that.

Harry Triguboff remains a leading force in the construction industry's sector of multi-story, multi-apartment buildings. He brought Sydney residents back from their large suburban residences and into urban dwellings. In the last few years he has been fighting back green activists who waged continuous campaigns against him. As a result, his buildings have gained much improved aesthetics and are more eco friendly. Sydney's 75 story Peace Tower is now considered an architectural gem.

I have been accused by the media of having made my fortune building cheap substandard homes. I spit on them!

Had those homes been of second rate quality, people wouldn't have bought them even for a low price. Housing should be well constructed but with no exaggerations. If you build using the most expensive materials and complicate the design with various decorative finishes you will certainly end up bankrupt. On the other hand, if you use substandard materials, no one will buy from you! In choosing a compromise you can make a big profits. My flats are pleasant enough and affordable. Any idiot can reach the same conclusions, many have tried to compete with me but lost their fortune so who's the clever one? - Harry Triguboff lets out a great laugh. He was laughing and swearing in equal measures the day someone tried to assassinate him. It was only by chance that the mercenary failed to shoot him. He was saved by the security firm employed by Meriton, his company. He defeated cancer and withstood heart surgery. The doctors failed to persuade him to give up work following a heart attack. Triguboff shouted at them:

I do not have attacks! It is I who give others heart attacks!

They say that following his heart surgery Harry continued running

his business from his hospital bed; his room having been turned into a business centre. Today when his nearest and dearest ask him, carefully, whether he has any plans to retire, Triguboff laughs, swears in Russian and continues to be convinced that he would be working till his last minute: "One day they will carry me out of my office on a stretcher, meanwhile, I am busy!"

Our conversation today takes place at the Knesset.

Why has he started helping his Russian speaking Jewish brothers in Israel?

"In addition", professor Ish-Shalom interrupts our conversation. "Mr. Triguboff bankrolls the conversion procedure at our Jewish Studies Institute [Beit Morashah] in Jerusalem".

Why has this institute become so important for you and not, let's say, aiding anti-terror efforts and or offering any other type of assistance to Israel?

Us Jews, for thousands of years have dreamt of establishing a Jewish state and as god helped us and today we have a state we can't afford to have two types of citizens, Jews and 'not quite' Jews. A divided nation is a much a scarier prospect for me than the Iranian threat.

I have been most impressed by the institute's conversion programme. Most satisfied by the process. Here in Israel, Shalom Norman is my right hand man and it is through him that I linked up with professor Ish-Shalom and other excellent rabbis. I remember, earlier on, dozens of meetings with IDF soldiers complaining about the conversion problems and now when I come, I often meet with soldiers we have helped. It is not acceptable that we have amongst us the "wrong type" of Jews. All these half Jews have arrived in Israel with their Jewish families in accordance with the Law of Return - they should not be considered as citizens yet with no nationality. If they consider themselves Jews we

should assist them in this definition, to come to a decision, to go through the conversion process and become Jews with equal rights. They serve in the army and for many Hebrew is their language and they should be allowed to merge in with Judaism and not be pushed about. After all they are our Jewish relatives!

And another thing; the rabbinical courts should at last understand the issues of those who are Jews not according to their mother but according to their father. To understand that time is of the essence. Either we let them join our people or we exclude them from Judaism which eventually will cause them to leave Israel and we will end up losing people of high calibre. The orthodox rabbis in Israel must recognise the right of these people to a conversion process and then the rabbis in Australia, America and other countries will change their stance on the subject. After all, they all compare their views to those of Israel.

Triguboff talks enthusiastically and

with much interest and for some reason my suspicion is raised; that this subject touches him personally. I try and stir the conversation in that direction but... Harry Triguboff immediately changes the subject. He is not one of those people one could 'twist'. He is accustomed to talk when he wishes to do so and if and when he does not, not a word can be drawn out of him.

Later at home I carry out a google search and find the answer to my supposition that Harry Triguboff does indeed have a personal stake in the conversions issue. It turns out that Triguboff is married, for the second time, to Ronda, an Australian and that only reform conversions are available in that country and that they are not recognised by the rabbinate in Israel. Later I learn that this billionaire's wife assists him with his various charity funds and runs her own ecological projects. The Triguboff's fund grants some 9 million dollars a year to various charities in both Australia and

Israel.

Harry Triguboff has been twice named Man of the Year in Australia, in 2003 and in 2009 and has been twice awarded Australia's medal of honour, in 1990 and in 1999, for his contribution to the housing sector.

In May 2011, the Business Review Weekly estimated Triguboff's fortune to be 4.3 billion dollars. Triguboff stands in seventh place on Australia's richest person's list. A year earlier, Forbes magazine placed him at number 316 on the richest men in the world list. Both publications reminded their readers that "Triguboff does not 'subscribe' to business partnerships and never had any business partners", being more of a 'lone wolf' type. It is his exceptional life story, his path as a Jew and an émigré who has achieved such heights of success that has made Harry Triguboff the man he is today; a man who not only loves his work but his people too.

Vesty

Exhibition of Joint Urban Design Work opens in Shanghai

Tel Aviv University and Tongji University in Shanghai unveiled the Sino-Israel Symposium and Exhibition of Joint Urban Design Work - "Urban Change" - at the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum (the former Ohel Moshe Synagogue) on 10 October, 2011.

The opening of the Symposium and Exhibition was attended by Consul General of Israel in Shanghai, Jackie Eldan, Deputy Consul General Oren Rosenblatt, and President of Jewish Community in Shanghai Maurice Ohana.

Professor Moshe Margalith from Tel Aviv University and Professor Wangjun from Tongji University both gave a speech at the opening ceremony. The event was also covered by local Chinese and Israeli

media.

"Urban Change - Echoes from Shanghai's Former Jewish Ghetto" consists of an academic forum and architectural design exhibition contributed by the students from Tel Aviv University and Tongji University. The main idea of design is based on the development of Tilanqiao Area, which used to be the Jewish Ghetto when thousands of Jews took refuge in Shanghai during WWII.

These older residential buildings where most of the Jews lived (now at Changyang Road and Zhou Shan Road) are protected as buildings of historical heritage by the Chinese government and are kept in good condition.

The collaborative project between the two universities was launched

in October 2010. A year later, the participating students are now presenting their designs at this joint forum and exhibition, and moreover, to the local government of Hongkou District.

Professor Margalith told Xinhua News Agency, "The reason that I am here is first in gratitude, for the generosity and hospitality of Shanghai. We can still feel the hospitality of Shanghai now. All the designs here are done by our students. The idea is to introduce new development to this area while protecting its old heritage, and let the old and new develop side by side."

All the design projects have been on display to the general public for two weeks during the month.

I Am a Native in My Adopted Land

By Sol Birulin

Born in a distant, foreign land,
In a culture of rice and paddies,
Of poor, yellow-skinned Chinese,
High cheek-boned people of the east.

The years went swiftly by.
I was surrounded by a natural habitat
Of muddy villages and huts, and people -
Struggling masses trying to earn a living for just a day.

I walked among the vendors.
Beggars, petty thieves, wrinkled faces, rickshaw coolies,
Vegetable peddlers, hopeful people,
Each seeking to survive another day.

Poverty was everywhere.
Fishermen sought catches in streams and rivers
Hands begging for alms stretched out
To anyone who had a heart, who seemed to care.

My grandfolds and my parents moved
To Tientsin from Harbin in early 1920.
My grandpa was a Rabbi who assumed the duties
Of a "moel", a "shohet" and a Rav.

Life began in 1921. Screamingly I entered life.
The world was BIG, and I was small.
But I learned to walk and try my wings, knowing so little,
Nothing in fact of who and what and where I was.

I began to see and touch things all around me;
And then was registered into a kindergarten
From which I was promoted fast to first,
then second Grades, as teacher's aide.
I guess I had the smarts.

And so the years went by. I went to an American
School, then switched to a British school,
Gradually progressing from childhood to manhood
Acquiring bits of cultures in a multi-cultured atmosphere.

At home I learned to be a Jew. At school
I made friends among the immigrants
From Russia, England, France, Japan,
From Italy and Germany, United States.
We lived among our Chinese hosts,
Basket weavers, chicken peddlers, fishmongers,
Beggars, marketeers, dirty hands, hardened faces,

The broken backs of laborers, shiftless, searching souls.
At home I lived among the thrills of Judaism-
White covered table at the Passover time,
The ceremonies of Seders and Sabbath days,
The preparations, excitements in a child's eyes.

The Purim, Succoth, Lag Ba'omer holidays
When guests arrived and we all played
Dressed up, rolled walnuts, spun dreidels
And ate and drank and talked and danced.

With faces changing as all recalled how some escaped
How they survived the plight from tyranny and fear
From humble dwellings to a world now here,
To be among a people who shared a life.

Shielded by a Chinese, an Asian world
Which accepted each of us and made us be
Physically, mentally, poor or rich, feel free
To live and share the fruits of brotherhood in this society.

In early 30's our family grew,
My great grandfather and his wife left Russia,
Joining our exodus. Our house was big,
Three stories high with servant quarters outside the house.

My great grandpa was a Rabbi too -
Koppel Schmerkovitch and his Sarah,
Rabbi Yoseph Saronsky and his Pese,
My mom, Tamara, dad, Leo Birulin,
All lived together sharing the closeness of a family.

We also had some space to shelter
My Aunt Sonja, Uncle Jacov Lifshitz when in town,
As well as Chinese maid, "amah" our chef,-the Ta-She-Fu,-
Our "boy",-Ta-Tuza' the servant and their families
In servant quarters off the large surrounding yard.

The servants had their duties, kept house,
Served us dressed in clean white robes.
Though Buddhists, they served us with reverence,
Fully respecting our Jewishness,
And learned our customs, language, our ways.

In 1929 my brother Alex joined us, and I took care of him,
Cradling him, walking him, playing with him,
And years went by in love, gentleness, comradery.
My father worked at the Betines pharmacy

And mother was a housewife to all of us.

Grandfather built the synagogue, and Dad, mom
With violin and voice and plays built our club "kunst"-
A community of people, Russians, Jews, anyone,
And made a place of comfort on our Asian island
Amidst our Chinese hosts, friendly but subjugated masses.

By that time I became aware that I was craving
For a future I could not yet foresee, but hoped that it
Would make a someone notable, respected, honored,
A man of peace, of justice and respectability,
A man of wisdom, creativity, yet a man of great humility.

But politics began to rise above the ground
And Japanese Empire began a war.
Chinese, millions of them became refugees,
They ran from slaughter, from greed and conquest.
This was in 1932 and on into the years to come.

Grandpa was sucked into the headship of our society.
He represented our Jewish interests.
The Japanese held him accountable for the
Establishment of co-ops, directives, guidance
To Jews under the guidance of the Japanese.

Our world of peace, our shelters from the past
Began to fall apart. Our world-wide contacts were
Increased, and Grandpa said: "'Tis time to move along."
And so we made our plans, filled out all sort of forms,
And finally grabbed hats and sailed away upon the sea.

We came to the America. We joined family and friends.
It took three or more weeks upon the Hie Maru,
Upon the waves of hope, of prayers, of luck,
To reach our goal - far from the land where we felt safe,
Where we were immigrants, yet were at home.

Leaving behind the graves of people we have known,
Of memories - how I grew up and learned
And from a baby became a man, an educated,
Talented man, eager to be a somebody,
A someone, a man of peace, of justice and humility.

By this time I had learned that God is an eternal.
Spiritual God of life, a living God of those who learn
And do, and share a brotherhood in everything.
By this time I had learned the sacredness of life.
By this time I had learned honesty and truth.

I learned that man is man of peace - not jealousy, not wars.
That man is not a welfare state,
But rock of ages through self-achievements
That man is brother to his brothers' lives.

A partner, a history, encyclopedia all roiled in one.

By this time I have learned that all men
Are equal in their goals and plight.
Their thoughts, their deeds, their weights, their heights,
Their breathing, dreaming, their delights,
Under the eyes and ears of God's everlasting sights.

I was named after my great grandfather
Schnayer Zalman Baronsky, who himself
Was named after the "Lubavitcher" Rebbe..
The learned, famous Rabbe
A man gifted with knowledge and God's laws.

Rabbi Schmerkovitch was Chief Rabbi in Krasnoyarsk,
A man awarded medals and a sword by Governor of the Czar,
For consultation and representation of Jews and Jewish
questions in Jewish communities in Siberia. Russia.

I never met nor saw my father's folks.
Grandpa Abraham and his wife Chaya,
Nor Father's family, Boris, Shura, Rosa, except Sonja.
All lived and perished as did so many Jews swallowed by
the waves of Nazism.

I heard stories about my mother's brother Voiya,
And her sister Clara. She became a doctor
And Volya, an engineer, but, I never met them.
Letter writing to Russia was a dangerous act,
And rumors, hearsay, kept our family in touch.

My grandma's brother, Isaiah, also lived with us;
His wife, and son, Gavrik lived with us too.
An eccentric man, a writer, Isaiah was a man of note,
But his eccentricity scared everyone away
And he, a hermit, a ginger-haired man, lived his way of life.

And so, you see, all of us lived our lives, yet
Each one pursued his destiny and fate
Amidst the Chinese hospitality - taking what we could,
Learning what we could, meeting who we could,
Surviving as we could amidst poverty and wealth of Asia.

My great grandpa prepared me for my Bar Mitzvah.
We walked together to the Shul, step by step.
His steps were short and slow, and for some reason
I loved these walks. His thick cane, his contagious smile
Were envied by all passers by, and so did I.

And my grandpa's words:"Learn all you can,
"I can't forget "Never forget who you are", he said. "You
have a mission,
A responsibility to carry on our Jewish past into
The future generation, to teach the sacred words of God,

His truth, honesty, forgiveness, peace, life above all laws".

And so I grew and mixed with everyone I met
With gentleness, in peace, in love. My world in China
Was a world all of its own amidst comradery, as well as
A world composed of immigrants from everywhere,
All faiths, all nationalities, striving for a better life.
Years of my schooling were filled with activities;
In my junior year I was elected Prefect of Elgin House .
Our school was structured upon a British system
To stimulate challenges and competition.
We had three Houses - Elgin, Gordon and Seymour Houses.

Our motto was Nihil - Sine – Ardore.
Our school song was Gaudeamus.
Our scholarship was scholarly .
Our sports were soccer, cricket, tennis, cross country runs
Our formal uniforms in blue and grey pinpointed us
As students of the TGS: Tientsin Grammar School.

Life in Tientsin, for me, did not exceed a couple of miles
But, as a child, I thought of it to be an endless paradise.
Amidst descriptions of a world outside - nurtured by
sounds
Of music, literature, songs around the globe,
And instruments from A to Z, and all in harmony.

I heard Chaliapin, his basso voice. I heard Heifeti and
Elman
On their Stradivarius. I heard great pianists. I heard
And I absorbed and quietly compounded everything
Into my dreams, as well as sounds of Chinese drums and
Violins, and clanging sophisticated sounds of my native
land.

One could say,"I smelled the roses and heard the winds
And listened to the dashing waves of the Pacific Ocean."
And scampered over hills and valleys and scraped the dust,
And felt the monsoon weather, and most of all
Lived an immigrant with immigrants from everywhere.

Against the background of British and Western
civilization
I lived among thousand of years of Chinese customs,
Among sun-scorched faces and working hands I lived a
Prince of conquered and victorious hordes.

I saw pigtails, the boundd feet. Shields and arrows of
Ancient tribals strife. I saw the vendors selling sweet
Potatoes, chestnuts in red hot charcoal in metallic
Portable barrels. Fruit threaded on chopsticks slipped off.
I ate "mantu", "shobin koza" smelted burlap bags with rice

I rode the rickshaws, the donkeys, I walked the streets

Of Western style, as well as saw sorrow in Asian eyes.
Sweat and labor, the stench of markets, trading posts.
Heard crackling fire crackers on Chinese New Year days.
I saw vests and pants, skull caps worn of ancient days.

I saw funeral processions strewn with false paper money
To follow dead to their eternal rest.
I saw paid mourners crying their crocodile tears
To ease pain and suffering and memories of the bereaved.
I saw a lot and I was part of it though I was not Chinese.

I was a Caucasian, a little island inside a conquered land.
My servants babied, walked me, served me well.
I talked their pidgin Chinese - they talked mine as well,
And we were family - yet far apart in stature, in status,
In opportunities, in dreams, security and satisfactions.

I heard cicadas, crickets. Saw marionette shows.
Felt stings of monsoon prickly-heat,
Survived diphtheria, malaria, chicken pox and measles
And lived a life I can't forget - with friends
Of various backgrounds, religions, customs, habits.

Their names alone could tell you from where they came:
Donald Carruthers, Michael Yanowitch, Joe Pascuai,
Jenny Bubeshko, Frank Ognistoff, Moses Merkin,
Leo Olshevsky, Robert Schmeriing, Alex Meisin,
Amie and Anton Cedervaits, Galia Petrenko,

Michael Horjelsky, Sandy Nehamkin, Fannie Henkin,
David Chapman, Eda Alperovich, Fannie Beerbryer, Sollie
Shiffrin, Sollie Colling. Chaim Werek, Mark Lifshitz,
Monya Pirutinsky, Arthur Li, Bill Murray, Eric Chang,
Y.C.Tu –

Some Jewish, Christians, each with a history, a culture, a relative
In a distant land, with a life of hell to tell of sufferings, survival.
The way they lived with prejudice and hate.
The way they learned and loved, and even killed to stay
alive another day.

I remember the Betines Pharmacy and my dad, the
pharmacist.
The Gordon Hall off the Victoria Park where mother sang,
acted in King Lear.
The Jewish club "Kunst. The synagogue, the Sabbath
walks with grandfolks.
The Min-Yuan sports arena. The Empire, Grand Theaters,
Russian Orthodox, Episcopal Churches. St Joseph, St
Louis schools. Our Jewish school.
Winter seasons with white snow-sleigh rides - pushed
and dragged by servants,
And summers in Peitaiho - evenings on rocks by oceanside.

Friends singing, breaking stillness of the night

While hearing crashing waves beating rhythmic cycles.
And in Tientsin, on Sundays, listening to British Army Band
Play in the gazebo at Victoria Park. Seeing people
Enjoying martial music surrounded by multi colored
flower beds.

I remember the silk worms, all sizes and of colors
Eating up leaves on trees. I remember the chop sticks
And with what skill they were used to pick up food from
bowls.

I remember the traders carrying loads of their goods
On both ends of long, wooden bars over their shoulders,
With baskets of chicken, hot teapots, vegetables –
I never saw Chinese drinking cold water - hot tea was
their drink.

I remember the long, smoking pipes Chinese held in their
mouths,
And the rickshaw coolies running for miles without stop.
I remember gathered bushels of wheat strewn over roadways
To be threshed by carts, by hoofs, by movements of
heavy, rolling wheels.

I remember the toil Chinese farmers endured
Rewarded by vegetarian morsel of food with their rice.
I saw and I took it to be answered by my reaction,
'That's life.' But, was that life or a survival after strife?
A needless torture each day in each Chinaman's Life?

I remember the stories from books my "amah" read to me
Of tribal wars with pictures displaying boats full
Of war-lords with arrows and shields and fires
Attacking and killing and dying and conquering.
Other war-lords of opposing sides.

I remember and I saw, and I smelled,
But did not understand the why and for what people
Suffered, cried, toiled, fought each other
Worked their hands to the bones,
Were born, grew in numbers, then withered and died.

I remember how Chinese took care of their children
Girls and boys. Cared for them, fed then carried them,
Rich or poor. Their teenagers were part of their family.
But when girls grew up, married them off and sent them
To live with their husbands to live with his family.

Boys would remain at home, acquire wives, helped their
family
Respecting the old folks. And after their deaths
Respecting their memory - believing them to exist as
Invisible spirits of ancestors - of those bringing
Blessings and good health and lots of good luck.

Each household had an altar with their Buddahs - their
gods
Sacrifices were made to the dead so that peace,
contentment
May surround their lives. Our Ta-She-Fu lived in our basement.
I often slipped into his room and saw his altar, his Buddah,
And smelled the aroma of his scented candles to his god.

He was a man of faith. A gentle man.
A man respectful of our Jewish heritage.
He learned our Yiddish, the holidays we kept,
The recipes of foods we ate.
His Haman Tashen were a delight, filled with jam
And poppy seeds, large Haman Tashen I loved to eat

My China was probably over 5000 years old
And had, I'm sure, more than fifty nationalities
With festivities centering around a lunar calendar -
Their families, always together, celebrating joyous events
Days and nights, especially in greeting the New Years.

With fireworks, thunderous roars, red colored lamplights
Sending out the old year, ushering the New Year in,
Despite their poverty or wealth, despite the hardships
Begging for alms from generous and often not so generous
Foreigners who passed them by without a comment or a
goodbye.

Thus I grew up absorbing my faith. Saw other faithfuls
Living theirs - Christian, Buddhists. Learned mine
And their mumble-jumble and hymns. Clean and dirty
words
And was a Chinaman in all respects except by birth.,
By opportunities, by gentleness of my Judaism.

And, in the course of time picking up, here and there
Few sordid echoes of a past where all of us, the immigrants,
Scraped for a chance to live like human beings -
Respected and respectful of other people in the world
Who seek a life of peace and justice for mankind.

Tidbits of stories I heard leaked in rumors and hearsays
Birulins lived in White Russia. Grandpa, was a doctor
Respected physician in Lugansk, a city, or a town,
Or a village I never saw or knew at all.

I heard about my father's musical aspirations -
He loved the violin. He studied and he played.
His teachers recognized his talent, recommended him
And he was interviewed by a Professor Auer –
Renowned teacher of Jasha Heifetz

But World War I precluded his musical career.
Pogroms too, burned up his aspirations.

His music and my mother's voice, mezzo soprano,
Helped carve efforts which led to the formation
Of our Tientsin Kunst Club where I read books, played
chess.

I heard about Grandfather Baronsky's family as well
Yosef Baronsky had six brothers and a sister.
Yosef was picked to be a husband to my grandma
From a Yeshiva by Great-Grandpa Schmerkovitch,
And this is how the family tree began.

I heard about my grandpa's brothers, one of whom
Once was viciously attacked by Russian thugs;
But he was tall and strong - this was in 1905, in Kishenev.
He grabbed them by their testicles and squeezed life out
of them,
And survived their anti-Semitic blows.

And now we come to 1937. The Sino-Japanese War was on.
Villages were destroyed. Dikes were blown up.
Japanese forces rampaged the countryside.
Tientsin was flooded. Out of rivers, streams and sewers,
For 40 days and nights, waters gushed out to eleven feet
high.

Chinese dead bodies floated by and the stench was
intolerable.
I was recruited by Betar. Chinese junks were rented,
And we, the Jewish scouts, future citizens of Israel,
Baked bread, collected candles, floated about
Distributing much needed products - it was given free to
everyone.

I was rewarded with a bronze medal for my involvement
Afterwards, and mother had peace of mind that I was safe.
I remember how baskets were lowered from windows,
And we, the scouts, members of the Betar, filled them up.

No one can imagine the joys we felt, the laughter we
heard.
There were moments of humorous scenes, when Uncle
Lifshitz Floated in a bathtub to reach our house to find
out how
We were, and waved a kiss when he had left.
The smell, the stench of rotting bloated bodies floating
Slowly by with garbage reminded us of cruelty and death
and war.

I remember Japanese soldiers and their bayonets, and
Long lines of Chinese refugees, by thousands, trying
To cross Japanese barricades, but turned back with mockery,
Sadistic laughter and bayonets. I tried to help one day
But points of bayonets stopped me cold touching my belly.

I remember how we left Tientsin, looked everywhere,

said Goodbyes,
farewells to places, faces, especially our Chinese,
Russian, English friends,
and waited at the railroad station all night With Chinese
masses, shoulder to shoulder,
Running away from the blasts and the soldiers at war.

And finally left China on a Japanese boat, the Hie Maru,
From Japan, across Pacific to America - greeted by family,
Slata, Dora, Anne, daughters of Mendel,
My grandfather's brother, a Reverend too, living in Seattle
And responsible for helping us with paper work to leave
Tientsin.

And so my story halts here. My country of my friends.
My Tientsin of my birth, were far behind us -
behind Grandpa, Grandma, my brother Alex, my mom,
my dad.
We now looked forward to this land of opportunities
This promised land for me, my brother to become grown
men.

My autobiographical, poetized, to coin a phrase,
Somewhat historical record of mine, my people, in free verse
In the good old summertime of my youth -
In a world far from all Western civilization in China
Cannot end without mention of an Asiatic symbol.

The USA has its Eagle. I lived among the British Lions.
China had and has its Dragon. While living there I saw
Dragon parades though not as much publicized
As in America. I never understood its pomp, significance.
Except that it was used in joyous moments and parades.

Since leaving China I learned somewhat the mystery
The reason for its existence, and why now in my life
It is an important "Mark of Zorro". Historically, the Dragon
Was a chosen symbol of the Emperor of China.
Signifying strength and power to strike fear in every heart.

Chinese are the "Descendants of people of the Dragon".
Its origin is not well known, but legend tells us that it
depicts
Imperial Power, and so in the Forbidden City,
In Peking, or now Beijing Dragon is featured
On steps, in carvings on palaces and tombs.

The First Ming Emperor decreed that the Dragon would be
His emblem, and from then on Dragons have become
Part of Chinese holidays, New Year especially, and joy
And power and might, and glory and pride
Of Chinese people and Chinese society.

(Extracted and edited from the original)

Akiva Pearlman's Circle of Life - The Long Journey Home

By Jessica Zwaiman Lerner

Akiva Pearlman's story can be easily defined as a hero's journey. The hero's journey is a pattern of narrative that American scholar Joseph Campbell described as a classic sequence of actions in which our hero goes on an adventure. During this time he grows, learns and goes through a process of self-discovery, only to come back to the point where he started, but with a series of achievements in tow.

A Secular Childhood

Pearlman was born Kenneth Barry Pearlman in Seattle, Washington. Pearlman's family did not have a lot of money and he was always concerned about finances. When he was five years old, while at a restaurant with his family, he looked down the menu and selected the cheapest item because he did not want his father spending money on him. "I didn't want to put a burden on anybody". His father said, "That's a side of French fries! That's enough for you?" "Two, I'll have two sides", Pearlman replied.

Pearlman was a bright and inquisitive child who would always have books by his side. "Early on I wanted to study everything. I was interested in everything about the world, especially science and math". At six years old he got his first chemistry set, the next year he got a microscope and a year after that he built his own telescope.

"I couldn't stand school because it was incredibly boring, so I would draw. The teacher would call my attention and ask a question and when I would answer correctly she'd say, 'Well, that's right'. She was very disappointed that I had the right

answer".

The religious orientation of Pearlman's home was completely secular. "We celebrated Chanukah once and didn't like it, so we went back to Christmas. I never heard of Rosh Hashanah or Shabbat, but my mother was very proud she was Jewish. We were all very proud that we were Jews, even though we didn't know anything about it".

"We had a ridiculously religious fanatic aunt, who was my father's sister – she was conservative. I never put two and two together that my father was raised religious because there were no signs".

His aunt insisted that Pearlman and his siblings have Hebrew names, which they did. Pearlman was named Akiva Baruch and on his twelfth birthday his aunt suggested that he prepare for his bar mitzvah. Pearlman was taken to a reform synagogue where they said the training would take two years. His parents then decided his younger brother should start training as well and so they did it together. "My parents fought over who should take us to Friday night services, because we had to go and they didn't want to go".

Pearlman and his brother hated every minute of services and studying. He says it was during Sunday school that he learned to hate Judaism. "The way it was presented was meaningless". He felt he was going through the process to make the parents happy.

"I really didn't think that Judaism held anything important for me, for my life. It didn't speak to me. It didn't guide me. On the other hand, I can't explain why I was always incredibly interested in Asian things".

One time his aunt gave him a camera as a gift and it was wrapped in pink Japanese newspaper. Pearlman said to his mother, "Mummy, there are people who can read this and someday I will learn to read this".

Art, Chinese and Travel

Pearlman finished high school and was unsure of what to study in college. His mother suggested that he study art because he could draw very well, and he did. "Not a typical Jewish mother thing to say!" Pearlman enrolled as an Art Major in the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. His art teacher was Mr. Wong, a Chinese man from Yale and a famous artist in his own right. "I once complained to him that I had these cheap watercolors. "Cheap," he said. He started painting these dots and as the water seeped into the painting a butterfly spread her wings. This guy was amazing! While he was teaching he talked about Chinese philosophy". This was incredibly interesting to Pearlman.

One day when criticizing one of Pearlman's pictures, Wong looked at the painting and said: "You know, not everyone can be a good artist". This drove Pearlman to drop art and study Chinese. "That perfect for you," said his teacher. "You're a man who likes to see instant result. You study art maybe twenty years, no result. But you study Chinese, your speak Chinese. Either they understand or they don't understand, instant result!" Pearlman studied Chinese, but after two semesters and summer school he dropped out of college. He felt college was not for him, even though he had a full scholarship. His next interest

was food, health and macrobiotics, so he went to Boston to pursue his interest. After a while he felt he wasn't getting the whole picture and Chinese medicine caught his eye. With US\$100 in his pocket, Pearlman set out across America and ended up in California. He then wound up in Mexico and through twists and turns found his way to Taiwan.

In Taiwan he studied Chinese and taught English to support himself. "I don't really know when it happened or how, but one day I understood everything the teacher said," Pearlman recalls. He could also read a few characters and found it all came naturally to him. He would wake up early in the morning and learn martial arts. He would then go to Chinese class followed by art or music class and he would finish his day by teaching two hours of English. Pearlman did not like teaching; however one day he met a teacher whose husband was studying martial arts at the top of a mountain. She told him that at the base of the mountain there was a very famous doctor. "I need to meet him," Pearlman said.

A Buddhist Monk

Pearlman met the doctor who taught him Chinese medicine. One day the master came down from the mountain and Pearlman quickly figured out it was the master who he needed to learn from. The master said he could be his student but he would have to become a Buddhist monk, shave his head and move up the mountain.

Pearlman followed the master to the monastery where four other people lived. It was not an easy life. They would wake up at 3 am in the morning and say prayers for an hour.

The master would have him drink bowls of water and then he would have to do push-ups. When he arrived Pearlman could do 19 push-



Akiva with his wife Liora and Etel Shayna

ups and the master asked that he add one every day. By the time he left he was up to 685 non-stop.

They would shower in a natural spring and they would eat breakfast by 6 am. It was time to work. Pearlman would carry the water from up the mountain down to the monastery and he would tend to the vegetable garden. His health improved and he became very fit. At noon they would eat rice. For an hour and a half they would either meditate or practice calligraphy, but they were not allowed to sleep.

Chores came next. The master would not allow students to read newspapers but he himself would comb through them looking for people in need. They would collect things they didn't need and on occasion they would go to the city and donate their supplies to the needy. One day Pearlman took all his savings and gave them to the master so he could buy a car and make this process easier.

"It was difficult to know what was a test and what was reality". Pearlman was never fully taught martial arts by the master. The master felt that Pearlman was more the scholar type

and not a martial artist. After three years Pearlman decided to leave the monastery. He was 23 years old and was pondering what to do with the rest of his life.

Pearlman got a ticket from his parents and he flew back to Boston. They were impressed by his new body, but not by his new mind. Very quickly he realized that he needed to go back to Taiwan. He took a bus back to California and worked in a Chinese restaurant until he saved enough money to buy a one-way ticket back to Taiwan.

Back in Asia he visited a blind monk fortune-teller who told him he needed to get a

degree in order to continue growing. Pearlman explained that a bachelor's degree would take him 4 years of study and a lot of wasted time and also expressed his concern about money. The fortune-teller told him the money would be taken care of, that it wasn't an issue and said he would finish the program in one year. Pearlman followed the advice, applied and got into the University of Massachusetts earning a full scholarship. After some exams he tested out of about two years of courses, his Chinese was excellent, but the University could not just confer a degree. So they requested 60 credits of work or the equivalent of two years of study.

The university would only allow him to take a maximum of 18 credits a term, but Pearlman convinced them to allow him to take 30 credits and if any of his courses dropped under a 3.0 grade point average he would step back. He finished the four-year degree in one year with a 4.0 average.

Kung Fu Star

Pearlman applied to graduate school,

and though he got accepted there were no scholarships. So instead he took a position as a group leader to the first group of American undergraduates from Dartmouth College who were going to study in China's Beijing Normal University. The year was 1980. While in Beijing, he met the now famous director, Alfred Chung, who offered him a walk-on role as an immigration official in his movie Greencard. Famous Kung Fu actor Sammo Hung was the star of the movie and asked Chung if Pearlman would be interested in teaching him English. Pearlman started working for Hung and he would follow him around everywhere including on dates where Pearlman acted as translator.

One day at the gym Hung was training and Pearlman was holding the punching pads. Pearlman decided to hit back and Hung said: "You know kung fu?" and Pearlman nodded, so they started sparring. Hung invited Pearlman to be on his next movie Eastern Condors. On the flight to Canada, where the movie was shooting, Pearlman met a Christian stewardess, and upon his return they started dating.

By 1981 Pearlman had decided formally to study Chinese medicine so he started going around China looking for a school, but the country was not ready yet to support international students. Though disappointed, Pearlman got the tip to go and study in Japan. He headed there and realized he needed to learn Japanese. He went for a two-year Japanese language program which he finished in one year.

While in Japan he taught English and Chinese to the Japanese, but realized he was not going to learn Chinese medicine there, however the money was good. He would later use this money to care for his mother during cancer treatments and to pay for his brother's education.

Return to Judaism

Around this time Pearlman's father

passed away, and in order to find meaning he began to re-examine Buddhism. At the same time his Christian girlfriend was reading all about Jesus and the New Testament. In order to further understand her, he bought the New Testament and started reading it. "All I found were conflicts. This contradicted this and that contradicted that. There is nothing consistent, so how can people believe this?" he wondered. He knew many of the principles of Christianity were based on Judaism, which prompted him to delve deeper into this avenue of thought.

He asked his aunt to send him some books on Judaism and an Art Scroll Siddur. He read over 65 books and found that "there is a common thread: God. I didn't believe in God, but I came across a book that said: 'If you have trouble believing in God just keep the mitzvahs'. Ah, that's a challenge and a test! I will keep all the mitzvahs as best as I can for one year and at the end of the year if I believe in God great, and if not I'll move on".

For a full year Pearlman followed all the mitzvahs as best he could. He stopped working on Shabbat and started keeping kosher. He memorized the Shema, and then he worked through the Amidah and learned all the basic prayers by heart. The closer he got to Judaism the further apart he became in the relationship with his girlfriend. Pearlman's life was transforming and he realized that the path he was on now could possibly be the truth he had been searching for all these years. This brought him to Jerusalem where he enrolled in a Yeshiva. The more religious he became, the clearer it was to him that he and non-Jewish girlfriend needed to go their separate ways.

After six months at the Yeshiva he was "starting to get distracted". His rabbi suggested that he go to New York to find a wife and to get a good job to support his future. He went back to

the US and took a job in a computer business.

"Dating was not going well". In his frustration Pearlman felt like he did not want to get married anymore. He went to see a Kabbalist rabbi to get a blessing. The rabbi put his hands on Pearlman's head and said: "He doesn't need a blessing. You'll see your grandchildren". Pearlman figured one day he might just meet someone.

One day came when he went to a Shabbaton and met Liora. They sat together and from that day until they got married. Pearlman sent her a card every day. After their marriage Pearlman got a job offer in Shanghai and they moved to China. They had their first child there and two more followed. "I feel that in order to develop in Judaism, you have to be married and have kids".

Pearlman and his family now live in Beijing where he is in charge of operations for an Israeli real estate company. He has come full circle in terms of his love for the Chinese language and culture and he is a practicing orthodox Jew.

"From my point of view I feel like I'm overwhelmingly ordinary compared to everybody else. I did interesting things, but I don't think I'm different from anybody else. I believe that there are three types of people that have a story to tell, who are successfully in their own right. One is a person who is born into money and has everything taken care of; because of that he is free to do many things without having to worry about income. The second person is naturally and extremely talented, and that's not me. And the third is a person who is very persistent and doesn't give up. If there is something in their mind they want to achieve it, they pursue it, even to the point being stubborn. That's me!

**(From Jewish Times Asia,
October 2010)**

Books

THE JEWS - WHY ARE THEY RICH?

Ronen Medzini

A book titled «the Jews - why are they rich?» would be considered anti-Semitic in every other country in the world. In China, however, it's a sort of compliment. Ronen Medzini elaborates on the Chinese people's idolization of the Jewish mind.

When I present myself to a Chinese person, it always boosts my ego. "A Jew? Very smart!" is the immediate response. It is mostly followed by "you are very good at business."

There is no doubt, however, that my favorite response is "you're like Einstein!" There is indeed a certain similarity between Einstein and myself. And the proof is that only this week I managed to repair a leakage in my washer's pipe system all by myself.

From time immemorial, and in many parts of the world to this day, the Jews have suffered from anti-Semitism and discrimination. In China, there are also prejudices against the Jews and Israel, but surprisingly enough, most of them are positive.

Although the large majority of the Chinese have never met a Jew, the

prevailing opinion in China praises and glorifies the Jews and the State of Israel. Other pearls of wisdom by the Chinese include: "Israel is small and surrounded by enemies, but manages to survive and succeed," and "China and Judaism are the only things that have maintained their character throughout history."

"Israel and China are close friends," the Chinese like to boast, showing impressive proficiency in the history of China's Jews. And indeed, the Jews owe a lot to China, which served as a haven of rest for Diaspora Jews throughout the previous century.

Jewish bubble in China

Historic documentations estimate that the first Jews arrived in China in the eighth century from Persia, through the Silk Road. The first Jewish community in China was founded in the year 1163 in the city of Kai-Fang in the Nan district, where the first Chinese synagogue was built.

In the end of the 19th century, Russian Jews settled in the cities of Tianjin and Dalian in northern China. But the biggest community at the time, which was comprised of some 25,000 Jews at its peak, was established in the city of Harbin, where Jews arrived following the extension of the Trans-

Siberian Railroad.

Teddy Kaufman, chairman of the Israel-China Society, was born in Harbin in 1924 and immigrated to Israel in 1950. His childhood in the city was quiet and normative. He had several Chinese friends who studied with him at school, and he took part in the active and routine community life.

"We knew nothing of what was taking place in Europe. We were completely disconnected from the Jewish world," he told me. When I asked if he had ever encountered acts of anti-Semitism, he said, "Of course, on the part of the Russians



Photo from 'Jewish ghetto' days in Shanghai (Photo: Amir and Dana Man)

in the city." And on the part of the Chinese? "Never."

When I asked if he was grateful to the Chinese for their fair treatment of the Jews, he answered immediately, "Without a doubt."

In 1931, and following the Japanese

takeover of the Manchuria district in northern China, the Jews' situation worsened. They were forced to live under supervision and restrictions on their businesses and comply with Japanese laws. In the coming years, some 4,500 Jews emigrated from northern China to Shanghai, before the Japanese took control of the city.

Haven of rest in Shanghai

"The world seems to be divided into two: Places where Jews can't live, and places which Jews can't enter," Chaim Weizmann wrote in 1936, after the Nazis rose to power in Europe and other countries banned Jews from entering them.

An exception was the city of Shanghai, which in the 1930s was the only place in the world which did not require an entry visa. In the 1930s and during World War II, some 18,000 Jews who fled Nazi Europe found refuge in the city.

They joined two waves of Jewish immigration which had already reached Shanghai; the first in 1848 of wealthy Jews from Baghdad who had accumulated a lot of power and property in the city; and the second of Russian Jews in the 1930s.

Most of the Jewish immigrants arrived with no assets whatsoever, and were financially supported by the rich Baghdad Jews and donations raised by the Joint organization in the United States. The Jewish community developed an independent life in Shanghai, which included schools, hospitals, cemeteries, theatres and even sports teams.

In 1937, Shanghai was occupied by the Japanese, and in 1942, following Nazi Germany's pressure on the Japanese authorities, the Japanese instructed all "the residents of Shanghai without a citizenship" (a political wording directed at the Jews) to move to a crowded area of more than 1 square-kilometer, in the poor quarter of Hongkou.

The quarter, which was known as "the Shanghai ghetto" was the land of the city's poor, and the Jews lived

there together with the Chinese. The living conditions in the Ghetto was extremely difficult, there was a great food shortage, and outbreaks of diseases due to the harsh sanitation conditions. In Shanghai, however, as opposed to the rest of the world, nearly all the Jews survived the war.

The Chinese were also persecuted and massacred by the Japanese at the time. "The Chinese and Jews had a special brotherhood, a brotherhood of persecuted people," I was told by Shalom Greenberg, Shanghai's rabbi. "Today too, the Jews are thankful to the Chinese for treating them as equals, as human beings."

Upon the State of Israel's foundation, and following the rise of Communism in China, which did not benefit minorities and different religions, almost all Jews left the city. Most of them immigrated to Israel, the rest moved to other countries. Today, Dvir Ben-Gal guides tours in the trail of the Jewish community in Shanghai.

The Jewish community in Shanghai is comprised of some 2,000 Jews today, all newcomers. Next week, at least 500 people are expected to take part in the Passover night service which will be held by the Chabad House in the city and will be conducted by Rabbi Greenberg.

'The Jewish road to wealth'

A common basic assumption in China and the world is that Jews have money and power. The difference is in the approach towards this assumption. While in many parts of the world the Jews' businesses and dominance are viewed with a feeling of disgust, the Chinese have developed great admiration, even idolization, for the Jewish mind.

What is the main reason for this? China doesn't feel, and never felt, threatened by the Jews. On the contrary, China views Judaism as an ancient and wise culture like its own, and respects the high moral and family values emphasized in the Bible.

Thus, the global suspicion/hatred/jealousy towards Jews' money and dominance has been replaced in China by another phenomenon: Curiosity. The question "why are the Jews so dominant in the world?" is asked by many Chinese.

I found proof in the local bookstore. In the business section, I caught sight of one book with an interesting title: "The Jewish road to wealth." When I asked the saleswoman if there were similar books, she referred me to an entire section of business books using the Jewish motif to attract readers.

Another book, which I immediately caught sight of, includes an illustration of Moses grasping the Tables of the Covenant and carries the title, "The ancient and great Jewish writings for getting rich."

When I asked the saleswoman which of these books was a best seller, she handed me the book "The Jews' business wisdom and the art of proper behavior according to the Talmud." I do not recall learning how to become rich in school, but this is definitely an original way to make the lessons more interesting.

Other books I found on the shelves included: «The most effective methods for Jewish businesses,» «Interpreting the Jewish merchants - how they sell and succeed» and «The Jews - why are they rich?»

It is very likely that books with similar titles published in any other country would be considered anti-Semitic and racist. In China, however, they can be viewed as a sort of distorted compliment to our heritage. After all, when I told the saleswoman I was a Jew, she immediately uttered, «Wow, you're smart!»

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6 September 1961

Opening Ceremony of Synagogue in Tel Aviv In Memory of the Jewish Communities in China



Rabbi Y. Unterman Late Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv Putting up the Mezuzah



*Dignitaries at the Ceremony. L-R: Mrs. K. Demetrovsky - Pres. American F.E. Society. N.Y.
M. Zeigraiev - Chairman of the Building Committee. G. Nehamkin - V.P. Igud Yotzei Sin
B. Kotz - President of Igud Yotzei Sin. Dr. A. Kaufman*

Mara Moustafine and the girl in the trench coat

Mara Moustafine is an academic. She is a historian and a former journalist, intelligence officer and diplomat.



She is clear that her book, *Secrets and Lies - The Harbin Files*, is history but it is really so much more.

Her book is the story of her journey, across continents, political systems and through time to uncover the truth of the fate of her family lost behind the Iron Curtain. The start of Mara Moustafine's journey began the day she stole a photograph from her grandmother Gita's drawer.

The photograph, of her grandmother Gita's sister Manya, is described by Moustafine as a portrait of a young woman who was, worldly-wise and modern. Dressed in an open-necked trench coat, with dark shoulder length hair gazing mysteriously into the distance.

Mara Moustafine was in fact named in memory of Manya, a common custom of Jews of Eastern European origin. Her family though, living in Harbin, changed her name slightly to attempt to disconnect themselves from the shetels they had left behind in Russia.

That single photograph was the spark that led Moustafine on a journey that ultimately maps out a complex and hidden lethal conspiracy hidden deep within forgotten Soviet file rooms where secrets seldom escape.

When asked if she regretted opening a Pandora's Box, Moustafine quickly responds with a definitive no. She explains, however, that her mother questioned her decision and asked why she needed to go since she knew

what happened there. They died in the time of Stalin was never an answer that would satisfy Moustafine.

As Moustafine explains, she was driven by curiosity and armed with chutzpah. She also gives quite a bit of credit to fate. She saw that suddenly the doors of the archives were flung open, and continues on to say that, A window of opportunity presented itself and I seized it. She admits that she likely would not have gotten as far in her search today. Timing was really everything.

Though the portrait of Manya, along with the realization that so little stood to prevent her and her parents from suffering the same fate as those in her family who unfortunately made the decision to return to Russia, was what sent Moustafine on this journey, the academic in Moustafine took over. Moustafine can't help sprinkling in questions about Manya like: Did she have a lover? Was she artistic? Was she fat or thin?

When asked if she at any point considered writing the book from Manya's point of view and allowing her to have a voice and answer these questions Moustafine responds, I actually have not grown up enough to write fiction. The only voice I have is my own.

This is the truth as I know it and satisfies the academic in me - this is the voice of authenticity. So as an academic she is methodical in her journey and meticulous with her research.

But, the basic humanity of her subjects creep through as she traces her family's journey from Russia to Harbin where she was born. In Harbin, unlike the shetels they were confined to under the Russian

Tsarist regime, they lived in a mixed community and Jews were afforded freedom and opportunity they had long been denied in the Pale of Settlement. Moustafine's heritage is, as she explains, a composite of many cultures.

Her grandparents all came to Harbin and flourished there and escaped the religious and ethnic prosecution they had suffered. Manchuria gave to minorities of the Tsarist Empire a chance for life without the restrictions that held them back.

She has two Russian Jewish grandparents on her maternal side. And on her paternal side, she has one Russian Orthodox and one Russian Tartar grandparent.

She refuses to rank her identities and seems to embrace them all. She states, I am Australian but not born in Australia, from China but not Chinese, Russian but not Russian Orthodox. Currently she is a Doctoral Research Student at the University of Technology in Sydney working on a project on identity entitled Making Multicultural Australia Project.

This focus on identity and ethnicity is perhaps something she had to grow into, a departure from the world of politics and diplomacy. As she states, As you get older, you start to look for roots; where you came from. There is something very special about the Harbin identity. It is not just what I say I am, but a real connection. She explains that the Harbinists (Russians from Harbin) collectively are extremely proud of that association whatever the individual and group hardships we suffered.

And despite the period of stability, freedom and the respite from pogroms and persecution, the safety of life

in Harbin though was ruptured by violent struggles between Bolsheviks and White Russians.

The Japanese occupation of China and the Russian-Japanese hostilities put them further at risk and ultimately scattered the already displaced Harbinsty community.

In the mid-1930s, most Jews left Harbin and neighbouring Hailar. Her extended family divided. Some members opted to return to Russia given the uncertainty of their fate in the turbulence of China under occupation.

Whether Soviet or stateless, there were few options open to them and great difficulty relocating elsewhere. Even Shanghai, a seemingly natural choice for many, presented challenges. Harbin, after all, unlike Shanghai, was essentially a Little Russia rather than a bustling international community. Mara Moustafine's parents struggled but chose to remain in China. They ultimately were able to immigrate to

Australia.

Those that returned to Russia, her family along with the other former Harbinsty, were arrested and charged as Japanese spies. They all suffered similar fates: forced confessions or torture, followed by years in the gulag where chances for survival were slim. The others were executed. Moustafine's research uncovered the documents and signed confessions that condemned her family one by one. She further uncovered Soviet documents that summarily condemned the entire Harbinsty community.

Moustafine interestingly quotes Joseph Stalin. One death is a tragedy; one million is a statistic. Stalin's quote and that single photograph of Manya merge and create a force. Moustafine was set on separating her family from the statistic.

While the history of not only her family but of the history of the Jews of Harbin and the history of the victims of Stalin's purges are preserved in

Secrets and Lies, it is the voices of her family that emanate in their struggles. Manya, though still shrouded in mystery, becomes real. Mara Moustafine's great-grandmother Chesna becomes heroic and grows to mythic proportions.

Following grueling years in the gulag, losses too great to count and the political executions of her husband and children, Chesna continued to fight for her own rehabilitation and the posthumous rehabilitation of her family members. She summarizes her struggles by simply stating, A human being is stronger than stone.

While Moustafine will never have answers to all of her questions and she will never know if Manya had a lover or other secrets of the soul, she is able to say, I know a hell of a lot more than when I started. History doesn't stand around waiting for you but it will meet you halfway.

Jewish Times Asia - May 2009)

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS

SOCIAL AID TO COUNTRYMEN

Dear Friends,

Pessah is approaching and Igud Yotzei Sin continues its activities and gives to the recipient's monthly social aid. According to our data for January 1, 2011, we grant a monthly social aid to 60 needy countrymen. They are mostly the elderly, lonely or ailing people. The situation of many of our countrymen is very grave and without the assistance of IYS they would not be able to make ends meet. In recent years, the number of contributors has decreased, both in Israel and abroad. Also, the rate of the foreign currency impacts adversely the local currency and therefore, the amount of money that we receive for the Social Aid Fund has become considerably smaller. Our social aid totals US\$100,000 per year. We herewith apply to you with a request to donate to the Social Aid Fund in lieu of flowers for Pessah, and for any other holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and family occasions or other festive dates. We will also send a proper notification to the person in whose honour the donation is given. We are aware that our contributors will derive great satisfaction from participating in the noble cause of helping our needy. Flowers wither soon but a good deed lasts long.

Your help will make the days of the elderly and lonely brighter.

Please send your donations to the following address:

Igud Yotzei Sin

P.O.B. 29786

Tel Aviv 61297

With friendly regards and all the best wishes for Pessah!

Board of Directors of IYS. President T. Kaufman. Deputy President and Treasurer Y.Klein



The Evolution of Sino-Israeli Relations

Peter Berton

Peter Berton is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations at the University of Southern California. He is an authority on the interaction between and rivalry among major players in the Asia-Pacific region (China, Japan, the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States), international negotiation behavior, territorial and maritime disputes in East Asia, and geopolitics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Prof. Berton lived in Harbin from 1928 to 1941. His memoir, "Growing Up Jewish in Manchuria in the 1930s," was published in Vol. 2 of Jonathan Goldstein (ed.), The Jews of China, under a pseudonym, Alexander Menquez. He is also the author of over 150 books, chapters, articles, and book reviews.

Relations between the Israeli and Chinese Communist Parties

According to Professor Aron Shai of Tel Aviv University, beginning in the late 1940s, a curious relationship between the Communist parties of China and Israel evolved. Shortly after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the Israeli Communist party held its first party congress since the country became independent.

Invitations were sent to Communist parties all over the world—including China's.

That gathering took place at the height of the Chinese Civil War, and therefore no Chinese delegates came to Israel to participate. Nevertheless, there were some interactions between the two parties. Israeli Communist party leader Meir Vilner and two of his associates visited China in September 1956 and several Israeli Communist women's delegations attended international

meetings in China. However, after the celebrated Bandung conference in 1955, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had already decided that maintaining ties with the Arab world was more important than any contact with Israel, and the relationship with the Israeli Communists lapsed.

Covert Non-Official Relations

In 1950, Israel was one of the first countries to recognize the regime of Mao Zedong, but the Chinese did not reciprocate that recognition until 1992.

Relations between Communist China and the Soviet Union deteriorated in the late 1950s, leading up to the border skirmishes of 1969. This presented an opportunity for the United States to establish relations with China. After Vietnam moved into the Soviet camp and invaded Cambodia, Beijing's ally, the Chinese decided to teach Vietnam a lesson. This incursion ended disastrously for the Chinese and exposed the obsolescence of Chinese military equipment. It was then that they decided to modernize their armed forces, and here Israel came into the picture.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, the Israelis found themselves holding vast stockpiles of Soviet-made weaponry, which they had captured from defeated Arab armies.

Chinese military equipment was also Soviet made, and secret talks began between the Chinese and the Israelis. In the end, the Israelis modernized and retrofitted thousands of Chinese tanks. To balance this covert relationship with the Israelis, the Chinese gave \$1 million to Yasar Arafat and raised the status of the PLO office in Beijing to that of an embassy.

When the revamped new tanks were paraded on China's National Day in October 1984, no mention was made of their origin.² Beijing was still not ready to recognize Jerusalem. Nonetheless, unofficial ties between the two countries continued to develop. By 1990, both countries had unofficial missions in Beijing and Tel Aviv. Around the same time, the vice president of Beijing University sought American help to establish Hebrew language instruction at the university; in the meantime, a number of Chinese students were sent to study Hebrew in Jerusalem.

Full Diplomatic Ties

The dissolution of the Soviet empire and the opening of the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 convinced China that the time was ripe to finally recognize the Jewish state. Thus, in 1992, forty-two years after Israel had recognized China, it granted full diplomatic recognition to Israel. This was heralded as answering "the need to bring together the world's two oldest civilizations." In the aftermath, three Israeli prime ministers and two presidents visited China. The association of former residents of China in Israel, Igud Yotzei Sin, took the initiative in creating the Israel-China Friendship Society, which puts out a bi-monthly bulletin called Israel-China Voice of Friendship. Sino-Israeli ties continue to develop, especially in the agriculture, military, and high-tech fields. Chinese students are currently studying agricultural technology in Israel, while the Israeli Training Center at the Beijing Agricultural University holds seminars led by Israeli experts for Chinese students from across the country. Israel's Ministry of Agriculture, in partnership with its

Chinese counterpart, has established three experimental farms in China. These provide an opportunity for Israeli research and development in genetic manipulation and the formation of new seed varieties. The farms also teach the Chinese about advanced irrigation and cultivation technology in an attempt to create a sustainable agricultural industry. This is particularly important in arid areas. Military cooperation continued after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jerusalem and Beijing. However, the plan to develop an AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) reconnaissance plane never came to fruition. The project was based on Israeli high-tech avionics, which were to be installed in a Soviet-built transport plane. The Pentagon objected to this transaction, even though it did not involve the transmission of any US technology, fearing that it would endanger the security of Taiwan.³ The Israeli scholar Yitzhak Shichor also claims that the US attempted to keep Israel away from the Chinese. Israel had to pay a heavy fine for breaking the contract, and relations with China soured for a number of years.⁵ However, military cooperation was given a boost after September 11, 2001, and especially after several incidents of terrorist acts by Chinese Muslim extremists, which led Beijing to approach Jerusalem for state-of-the-art surveillance and anti-terrorist equipment. The cooperation became even closer in preparation for the Beijing Olympics of 2008.

In 2004, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert led a delegation of over 100 Israeli businessmen on a visit to China. This trip included Harbin, where Olmert's parents lived in the 1920s and '30s before settling in Palestine. Bilateral trade continues to develop, especially in the high-tech fields of information technology, telecommunications, electronics, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, solar energy, life sciences, and environmental

protection. There are currently almost 1,000 Israeli firms operating in China. Another aspect of the Sino-Jewish connection is the manufacture of kosher foods for the over-\$10 billion kosher food market in the United States and also for the market in Israel. A small "army" of bearded, awkwardly dressed Orthodox kashruth inspectors is spreading all over China, as 500 Chinese factories are currently engaged in producing kosher foodstuffs. Many non-Jews consider kosher as a gold standard for quality. This is especially important when a number of products of Chinese origin turn out to have caused health problems. A kosher restaurant opened in Beijing to cater to the local Jewish community, but also in anticipation of the large number of Jewish tourists who came to watch the 2008 Olympics.⁷ Yet another link between China and the Jews is the brisk adoption of Chinese girls by Jewish couples in the US.

The Einstein Exhibit Fiasco

When Chinese President Jiang Zemin visited Israel in 2000, he toured the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As an engineer, he was particularly fascinated with the archives of Albert Einstein. Einstein, who was one of the founders of the Hebrew University, along with Sigmund Freud, Chaim Weizmann, Martin Buber, and the university's first president, Judah Magnes, bequeathed his archives to the university. Jiang mentioned to his host that along with other world-famous scientists, Einstein's picture adorns all Chinese schools; there would be great interest in China in an exhibit from Einstein's archives. His host, then-university president Hanoch Gutfreund, happened to be a physicist and the head of the Einstein archive. The Israelis agreed to send an exhibit from the archive to China and to other countries. As the touring Einstein exhibit reached Singapore, the Chinese authorities asked for the display notes, so that

they could be translated into Chinese. The Israelis were then flabbergasted when the Chinese demanded that several items be taken out of the exhibit. The first was a caption that noted the fact that Einstein was a Jew. The other items referred to his relationship with Zionism and Israel, his being one of the founders of the Hebrew University, and the fact that upon Chaim Weizmann's death, he was offered the presidency of Israel, which he declined. It is hard to identify the locus of that seemingly incomprehensible Chinese decision, but in a totalitarian system, strange and stupid decisions are often made. The Israeli authorities naturally refused the Chinese demand, and the exhibit went to Taiwan instead of Communist China.

Antisemitism and Philo-Semitism in China

The word for Jew in China, Youtai, has no pejorative connotations, even though the radical of the character for you denotes an animal. That in itself says something about the way in which Chinese see themselves-as culturally superior to others.

The indigenous Jews of Kaifang were well regarded, and there is no record of anti-Semitism against them. In fact, the first seeds of anti-Semitism were planted in China at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Christian missionaries, and almost a century later by White Russians and Nazis. After the Opium War, when Jewish merchants arrived along with those of other nationalities, the Chinese made no distinction between Jews and other foreigners.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the first president of the Chinese Republic, was well disposed towards the Jews and in his famous treatise, "The Three People's Principles," he praised Zionism as an inspiration for the Chinese Nationalist movement. In a 1920 letter to the Israel Messenger, organ of the Baghdadi Sephardic community in Shanghai, he repeated his admiration and support for Jewish

independence:

“Though their country was destroyed, the Jewish nation¹⁰ has existed to this day...

[Zionism] is one of the greatest movements of the present time. All lovers of democracy cannot help but support wholeheartedly and welcome with enthusiasm the movement to restore your wonderful and historic nation, which has contributed so much to the civilization of the world and which rightfully deserve [sic] an honorable place in the family of nations.” Dr. Sun also saw a parallel between the persecution of the Jews and the humiliation of the Chinese people during the era of Imperialism. Similar sentiments comparing Zionism and the Chinese Nationalist movement can be found in the journal *Dongfang zazhi* [Eastern Miscellany], an influential intellectual journal published in Shanghai in the pre-Communist era. More specifically, an article in 1928 cited five reasons why the Jews would be successful in their nationalist aspirations:

- The cohesive force provided by both nationalism and religion;
- The tenacity that was built up in 2,000 years outside their homeland and was more recently displayed in their pioneering recolonization;
- Their 2,000 years of literacy;
- Their technical expertise; and, most important,
- Their nationalist movement, which conformed to the general trend of the contemporary world.

Some virulent anti-Semitic articles also appeared in the Chinese press, most of them translations from English, White Russian, Japanese, and German sources. In contrast, Dr. Ho Fengshan, the Chinese consul in Vienna, although not as well known as the Japanese consul in Lithuania, Sempo Sugihara, saved hundreds of Jews from the Holocaust by issuing visas between 1938 and 1940. In March 2001, Fengshan was honored by Yad Vashem (Holocaust

Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority). Further proof of the absence of native Chinese anti-Semitism was later demonstrated by the welcome given by the general public and local Chinese publications to the Jewish refugees.

The 1917 Balfour Declaration, which promised Jews a homeland in Palestine, was generally lauded by the Nationalist Chinese government; however, when the vote for the partition of Palestine came up in the United Nations in 1947, the Chinese Nationalist representative abstained. The reason for the abstention and for China’s not having voted against partition, as did almost all Asian countries, was probably its desire to please the United States and also possibly because of the presence of millions of Muslims in China.¹³ When the Chinese Communists came to power, they followed the lead taken by Chinese Nationalists in dealing with Israel in the context of official sympathy for the Arabs. When a market economy emerged in China after years of repression and atrocities by the Red Guards and the Gang of Four, the Chinese began to encounter Jews among the thousands of foreign businessmen, journalists, diplomats, and academics—but without paying any particular attention to their ethnic or religious origin. In spite of the pro-Arab stance of the government, the Chinese continue to view the Jews with admiration and try to emulate certain Jewish traits, which they believe will lead to economic success.

The three most recognizable Jews in China are Karl Marx, Albert Einstein, and Sigmund Freud. China Jewish Culture, a Chinese-language magazine claiming to be the Sino-Jewish [sic] Cultural Research Magazine, published, on its inside front cover, pictures of what it claimed to be the twenty-five most prominent Jews in history—some of them clearly not Jewish, and a few others with tenuous, if any,

Jewish connections. The first three mentioned above are followed by Pablo Picasso, Christopher Columbus, Henry Kissinger, Franz Kafka, Steven Spielberg, Itzhak Perlman, Paul Samuelson, Andy Groves (co-founder of Intel), Isaac Asimov, Ariel Sharon, Larry Ellison (co-founder and CEO of Oracle), Isaac Levitan (Russian-Jewish landscape painter), Marcel Dassault (founder of Dassault Aviation and Dassault Industries in France), Michael Bloomberg, Marc Aurel Stein (Central Asia explorer), Steve Ballmer (CEO of Microsoft), Yitzhak Rabin, Imre Kertesz, Alan Greenspan, George Soros, Jacques Offenbach, and Dale Carnegie. (The intention was probably to include Andrew Carnegie, though neither Carnegie was Jewish). It has been reported that when a Chinese finds out that someone is a Jew, he is likely to mention the word Einstein. This pro-Jewish attitude on the part of the urban Chinese may be partially attributed to the Chinese fear of home-grown Islamic terrorists. Whatever the cause, pro-Jewish and pro-Israel sentiments are abundant when we look at the internet in China, despite the persistent pro-Arab stance of the government.

Research in the Jewish Field and Restoration of Jewish Historical Sites Dr. Pan Guang, Dean of the Jewish Research Center in Shanghai, declared that Jews in China are a “hot topic” for academic research, mass media, television, and movies.¹⁴ Dr. Pan, who is also a professor at the Shanghai Center of International Studies and Institute of European and Asian Studies at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, is the most important person in China in promoting the study of Jews in China, Judaism, and Israeli history. He was the first Chinese academic to recognize the importance of Sino-Jewish and Sino-Israeli relations, and he was the organizer of the first Jewish research center in China, and serves as its dean. A man of multiple

interests, he is also the vice-chairman of the Chinese Association of Middle East Studies, director of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization research center in Shanghai, and a senior adviser on terrorism to the mayor of his native city. In addition, he is an adviser to many organizations outside China. He is responsible for organizing numerous conferences, and is the author of many publications, including the latest in 2008, "Jewish Studies in China" (in Chinese).

After the establishment of relations with Israel, the Chinese authorities decided that Jewish heritage in China should be preserved. Moreover, they encouraged former Jewish residents of China in Israel, the US, Canada, Australia, and other countries to visit their one-time homeland in order to help in the economic development of China through investment and joint ventures. Research centers for the study of Jewish history and culture were established within the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Shanghai and Harbin. Synagogues, Jewish community centers, and cemeteries were restored (at a time when Jewish cemeteries continued to be desecrated in Europe). Because of the rapid expansion of Harbin, the foreign cemeteries (including the Jewish ones) were relocated in the 1960s to a rural area. (The city's population also grew exponentially from several hundred thousand Europeans and Chinese before the revolution to almost ten million in 2010). The "New Synagogue" in Harbin was converted into a dance hall after the Jews left Harbin in the 1950s, but was later refurbished to serve as the museum of Jewish life and culture.

Plans are presently underway to restore the synagogue on Nanjing Road in the center of Tianjin along the lines of the synagogues in Shanghai and Harbin. It is noteworthy that the synagogue is the only extant structure among the

other buildings that housed Jewish communal activities. The Chinese municipal authorities hope that this restoration will increase tourist traffic to Tianjin, one of the largest cities in northeastern China, and help in the development of economic relations between China and Israel.

The Study of Hebrew, Judaism, and Israel

Beginning in the 1990s, Chinese scholars came to the United States and Great Britain for graduate studies in Judaism, as well as Jewish history and culture.

Upon their return, they began to teach courses in Jewish studies at several Chinese universities. Their interest in Judaica, however, was largely accidental.

Professor Xu Xin of Nanjing University, for example, became interested in Jews when he stumbled on the work of Saul Bellow after the latter received the Nobel Prize for Literature. His interest was further stimulated by a visiting Jewish American professor of literature, who invited him to come to America to start graduate work in Jewish studies.¹⁶ Upon his return via Israel, Xu began to teach a few courses on Judaism which led to the establishment of a Jewish studies center in Nanjing in 1992. Thanks to financial assistance from a Jewish philanthropist and other Jewish foundations, that institution was transformed into the Glazer Institute for Judaic Studies in 2006.¹⁷ Some 200 students are presently taking courses at the institute, and its library today boasts the largest Judaica collection in China. In 1989, Professor Xu took a leading role in establishing the China Judaic Studies Association. One of his major scholarly works was the translation into Chinese of the abridged Encyclopedia Judaica. For his efforts to promote Judaic studies in China, he was awarded an honorary doctorate at Bar-Ilan University in 2003.

Another influential figure in Judaic

studies is Professor Fu Youde. A specialist on the philosopher George Berkeley, he also accidentally discovered Jewish studies when he was invited to work on a project to translate the works of Baruch Spinoza into Chinese. In 1992, he took up the study of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at Oxford, and later at Leo Baeck College in London, one of the foremost centers for Jewish learning.¹⁸ Fu Youde first established a small center of Judaic studies at Shandong University, in Jinan, fittingly, the birthplace of Confucius. In 2003, this grew into the Center for Interreligious Studies, which has a staff of over twenty professors and researchers. Appropriately, he began the comparative study of Confucianism and Judaism, which he developed in numerous lectures in the US and Britain.

Both Xu Xin and Fu Youde have found the study of Judaism, besides its intrinsic value, to be of importance for contemporary China for other reasons. Xu says that "without an understanding of the Jews, you cannot understand the Western world." Fu admires the fact that "the Jews have modernized themselves materially... while maintaining their cultural identity." However, he laments the fact that because of their pursuit of materialism, the Chinese have lost their identity or "Chineseness." He even indicts Chinese youth for being inhumane or "soulless."

Besides Nanjing and Shandong, Hebrew and Judaic courses are also taught at Beijing University and several other Chinese institutions of higher learning. There are still relatively few Chinese professors in the field, but their numbers are augmented by visiting professors or language instructors from Israel and the US. Chinese specialists on Judaism and Israel, though small in number, have substantial outreach through teaching, translations of Yiddish and Hebrew literature, organizing workshops, conferences,

exhibitions, cultural exchanges, and the publication of hundreds of books and articles. Some of them, alongside analysts specializing in Middle Eastern (including Israeli) affairs, who may not have training in Jewish studies, may also be called upon to advise the party leadership.

The wider Chinese audience learns about Jews and Israel from newspapers, television, movies, and increasingly, the internet.²¹ Although several unauthorized translations of Anne Frank's diary circulated in China in the 1980s and '90s, an official exhibition opened in Hong Kong at the end of 2007 and was visited by no fewer than 6,000 people. More importantly, there were special sessions for teachers, who incorporated this material, and information about the Holocaust in general, into their curricula. The exhibition then proceeded to the National Library in Beijing, where it ran for several months.

The Emphasis on Making Money "the Jewish Way"

Deng Xiao Ping's exhortation that "to be rich is glorious" has sent the Chinese in search of books on how to achieve that aim. About a third of all books published in China today deal with business and entrepreneurship, and a good portion of those identify the Jews as holding the key to success in business. For a generation of Chinese who toiled in obsolete state enterprises under the slogans of Mao Zedong, it is understandable that they would now want to find a shortcut to becoming capitalists.

Some of the representative titles of Chinese-language books promoting the Jewish connection to success are: "The Legend of Jewish Wealth," "The Eight Most Valuable Business Secrets of the Jews," "The Jewish Road to Wealth," "The Secrets of the Jews," "How to Be a Jewish Millionaire," "Jewish People's Bible for Business and Managing the World," "The Ancient and Great Jewish Writings for Getting Rich," "Jewish People and

Business: The Bible of How to Live Their Lives," and "The Jews' Business Wisdom and the Art of Proper Behavior According to the Talmud." The headline on one of the covers of the "Shanghai and Hong Kong Economy" magazine read: "Where Does Jewish People's Wisdom Come From?"

Entrepreneurial Chinese English-speakers compiled many of these books and some of them, such as "Jewish Entrepreneurial Experience and Business Wisdom," by William Hampton, are actually complete forgeries. That volume, smartly packaged in red and gold, was billed as a bestseller in the US. According to Hampton's biography, he was one of the first graduates of Harvard Business School's PhD program in business administration, an editor at Business Week, and a professor of business and philosophy, with years of experience in Jewish studies. William Hampton does exist and he was a bureau chief for Business Week, but as a specialist on automotive affairs, with no connection to Harvard, no professorship, and no knowledge whatsoever of Jewish affairs.²³ Some of these books cite sound business practices that have little to do with Jews or Judaism, and some even falsely quote the Talmud. This demonstrates to what extent the Chinese hunger for a possible shortcut to becoming rich.

Having a possibly more deleterious effect on the admiration of all things Jewish in China is the surprise bestseller by Hongbing Song, "Currency Wars." True to most conspiracy theories, the book covers Waterloo (which does have a connection to the Rothschild banking family), and continues with a hodgepodge of topics, such as the crash of the Japanese bubble economy, the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98, and environmental degradation in the developing world. These topics have precious little to do with the Rothschilds, who,

incidentally, are no longer major players in the financial world. The book also attracted attention among Chinese officialdom, and the author was swamped with offers to write other books.²⁴ What effect this will have on the Chinese perception of the Jews is hard to measure or predict, especially at the time of an economic crisis, or general downturn in the economy.²⁵ Another example of an attempt to emulate the Jews is the publication of a series of ten children's books, "The Secret to the Jews' Success," which stress Jewish morals such as respect for elders, hard work, and quick-witted thinking.

Conclusion

The relationship between the People's Republic of China and Israel is a thorny one. First, in the era of Maoism, there was an ideological need to side with the Arabs against Israel, which was cast as the "running dog of Imperialism." Second, in the era of market economy, the Chinese hunger for oil forced the government to continue that policy. In the era before recognition of Israel, the Chinese turned to the Jewish state for the secret transfer of Soviet-made military equipment. After the recognition of Israel in 1992, Chinese leadership was attracted to Israel because of its state-of-the-art military technology, its advances in agriculture in arid areas, and the general high level of its science and technology.

An important characteristic of the Sino-Israeli relationship is the fact that the Chinese, lacking a Christian or Islamic tradition and attitude toward the Jews, were unique in their philo-Semitism, in spite of external sources that tried to plant seeds of anti-Semitism. The present Chinese attitude toward the Jews as being smart, powerful, and holding the secret to success in business is also one of admiration for having endured two millennia of exile and persecution, and having retained their traditional values. This was the

view of Sun Yat-Sen, the first president of China, who saw inspiration for China in the Zionist effort to build a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. The Chinese view of the Jews as smart and powerful is, of course, an exaggeration, and even a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it promotes admiration and, on the other, it creates surprise and

suspicion, especially when the well-worn canard about Jewish world domination is translated into Chinese and becomes widely circulated. In times of uncertainty and socioeconomic crises, the historical tendency has been to look for outside scapegoats. Throughout history, Jews have been victimized as a result. Such a scenario is unlikely in twenty-

first century China. There is every indication that Jews and the Jewish state will continue to be looked upon as the other ancient and great civilization from whom much can be learned. The Chinese will continue to respect the Jewish people's history of adaptation on the road to modernity.

Points East - March 2011

Chinese Authority on Jews in China to Lecture at Sarah Lawrence College February 15, 2011

Dr. Pan Guang said that the Jews have had a long history in China, with the earliest groups arriving via the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty, around the 8th Century, says Dr. Pan Guang, Dean of the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai, the most influential research institute in China studying Judaism and Israeli affairs. Dr. Pan will deliver a lecture - Jews in China: Legends, History and New Perspective - at Sarah Lawrence College on February 15 at 5:30 p.m. in the Donnelley Theatre, Heimbold Visual Arts Center. The program is free and open to the public. For more information please call (914) 395-2412.

Dr. Pan, who has been conducting research and giving lectures widely in North America, East Asia, Russia, Central Asia, Europe, Middle East and Australia, holds a number of prestigious posts in Chinese institutions on International Studies, Asian Studies, Middle East Studies and Jewish Studies, is widely published, and is the recipient of

numerous awards and honors.

His talk at Sarah Lawrence, which is presented in cooperation with the Westchester Jewish Council, will address the origins of the Jewish community in China and the arrival of waves of Jewish immigration including Sephardic Jewish merchants and businessmen with British citizenship following the Opium War in 1840-41 and the subsequent upsurge of trade with Britain; Ashkenazi Jews fleeing anti-Semitism in Russia and Eastern Europe beginning in the 1880s and as a result of the Russo-Japanese War and Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917; and Jews seeking refuge from the Nazis.

Dr. Pan Guang is the Director and Professor at the Shanghai Center for International Studies and Institute of European & Asian Studies at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. He is Director of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Studies Center and Dean of the Center of Jewish Studies Shanghai

(CJSS), as well as Vice Chairman of the Chinese Association of Middle East Studies.

Appointed Ambassador of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in 2008, Dr. Pan is an International Council Member of the Asia Society (U.S.), Senior Advisor of the China-Eurasia Forum (U.S.), Advisory Board Member of the Asia Europe Journal in Singapore, and Senior Advisor on Anti-Terror Affairs to the Municipality of Shanghai and Ministry of Public Security of the PRC. He received the 1993 James Friend Annual Memorial Award for Sino-Jewish Studies, 1996 Special Award for Research on Canadian Jews from China. In 2004 Russian President Vladimir Putin presented him with the Sankt Peterburg-300 Medal for Contribution to China-Russia Relations. He was awarded the Austria Holocaust Memorial Award in 2006.

Jewish Times Asia - Nov 2011

SARA ROSS 96



*Our Oldest Member. Sara Ross – of Harbin & Shanghai. Reached 96 in October 2011.
Until 120!*



*Mrs. Lyka Kaganer – Sydney, Australia. Visited Beit Ponve – November 2011
Lyka is from Hailar and Harbin*

SOPHA VEINERMAN - 90

On October 12, my dear sister Sopha Veinerman celebrated her 90th birthday. It was a great day for all of us to be with her, even though she is walking with a walker she does get around, still plays cards once a week. As a matter of fact during the celebration surrounded by her family and friends she danced "freilach's" with me. May she have many more good years. With much love, Mira Mrantz.

Dear Sopha,
Congratulations and best wishes from Igud Yotzei Sin

50 Years 1961 - 2011

Synagogue in Memory of the Jewish Communities in China



*Memorial plaque in memory
of Dr. A. Kaufman
President -
Jewish Community Harbin*



Memorial Tablets



Synagogue Prayer Hall



Plaque in Memory of the Rabbis in China

WE NEED SUPPORT!

*Please, make a donation to the Igud Yotzei sin Social Aid Fund.
Your donation enable us to do our community work.*

ISRAEL'S CHINESE MEDICINE MAN



Haifa native Roni Sapir was studying geography and computers in the university and the Polytechnic when a segment of the Israeli TV program Innovations and Inventions caught his interest. It showed a Chinese man having open-chest surgery with no anesthetic, completely awake and some Chinese doctors stimulating needles in specific points all over his body.

"The patient was completely awake and conversing calmly while the doctors dug in his chest," he recalls. He was feeling no pain because of the Chinese needle technique called acupuncture. And his recovery time was much faster, too.

"Wow, this is really amazing," Sapir recalls thinking as he watched.

Sapir started his first journey on this long path in 1982 in Israel studying Chinese Medicine at the Israeli College of Complementary Medicine. In 1984 he decided that Chinese medicine must be studied on the basis of the Chinese Classics and started looking for the best school that teaches classic Chinese medicine around the world. A year later he found a school and started his eight years studies, at the International College of Oriental Medicine in East Grinstead, England. Roni came back to Israel in 1993, with a dream and vision that he accomplishes every day, 'spreading

out the beauty and the way of health and living of Chinese medicine'.

The effort involved paying a high price of total loyalty, determination, responsibility and humanity. The action involved parallel ways. One is introducing the medicine around the population and the other is to teach and train therapists, clinicians and researchers to the highest possible standard.

Today, the 50-year-old Sapir is founder and dean of the Israeli Centre of Classic Chinese Medicine, named East-West. Founded in 1997, Sapir works with a number of hospitals in Israel and around China.

He teaches practitioners in Israel and China, sees patients internationally and is director at the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies- a body that oversees 174 associations in about 80 countries. Roni is the sole Westerner at some committees at the federation like the Academic and the Cancer research committees. He is vice president of the new International Red Cross Hospital in Hunan, China as well.

Marine photographer or acupuncturist?

The man who is now one of the world's foremost authorities on the ancient medical art didn't change gears the very night he saw that TV show. He was still hoping to be a marine photographer with a backup in computer science.

It wasn't until two years later that Sapir was standing near a bus stop newspaper kiosk and saw a headline announcing the opening of a Chinese medicine school in Tel Aviv. When he called to inquire, he learned that it was started by two Israelis who had studied in California. The classes were to be given on Tuesdays - the

one free day in Sapir's schedule.

Over three years of Tuesday classes, he learned the basics of what is known as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), whose practices include herbal medicine, acupuncture, massage therapy and dietary therapy. Sapir was drawn to learn more about Classical Chinese Medicine (CCM), grounded in the original spiritual underpinnings of the practice - such as the yin and yang forces, the five elements of earth, fire, wood, metal and water and the practical application of the I Ching and the Stems and Branches. CCM and its practitioners were banned from China after the 1949 Communist revolution, which is why Sapir discovered that the best school for CCM was in England.

"I didn't know a word of English, but they took me on trial," Sapir says in his now excellent English. He studied there for 1984 to 1992, earning an advanced degree and becoming a clinician and teacher at the school. Eventually, he was running five clinics in England.

And then, a little voice told him to go home. Taking it as a sign from God, Sapir packed enough things for a week and waited at his parents' house for the next "sign." It came when he went to the TCM school in Tel Aviv to meet a friend for lunch, and ran into the director of the school, who asked him to be the director of studies of the Chinese medicine school in Israel. A month later, he was back to stay.

Forging connections in China

Sapir later became medical adviser to a complementary medicine settlement at the northern tip of the Dead Sea. He started a class there as well, but when this area was promised by the Israeli government

to the Palestinian Authority they had to leave. This group of students formed the nucleus of East- West, which Sapir established in 1999 in Tel Aviv.

In the intervening years, Sapir was spending a lot of time in Beijing, forming connections with the Chinese Health Ministry facilitated by the Chinese embassy in Israel. CCM was by then regaining favour in the land of its origin.

"They got me meetings with the directors of all Chinese medicine programmes there, and we started working together to help me open the best school for Classical Chinese Medicine," says Sapir.

The four-year East-West curriculum, which will also be given in English starting in the fall of 2011, provides 5,000 academic hours of instruction in areas such as Acupuncture, Herbal Medicine, Tui-na - Chinese physiotherapy, Chi Kong, Lifestyle, Chinese Diet, Breathing exercise and Meditation. Sapir takes fourth-year students for a month of training at a Chinese Medicine hospital in China. The main idea behind Chinese medicine in the west is to support, not supplant, traditional medical approaches to everything from oncology to pediatrics, to pain, he stresses.

No countries outside Asia regulate Chinese medicine - Sapir and others brought this to the attention of the Knesset in 1997, without any concrete results - so potential

patients are advised to find out where the practitioners studied and what insurance they hold. "It's better to go to clinics at schools or institutions, where you know there is a group and academics behind it," Sapir advises.

While TCM "talks more to the Western mentality" by translating knowledge into action, he explains, "in CCM you 'forget' your knowledge and absorb the patient at a point of emptiness, and then only later bring your knowledge into it."

CCM practitioners treat the patient rather than the disease, taking into account factors such as the climate in which the patient lives, the time of day at which the patient arrives for treatment, the patient's temperament, his mental and emotional state, traumas that he had and his ability to contain the surroundings that he lives in. Differences in the proportion of humidity and dryness, light and darkness are believed to affect how the body reacts. The main diagnosis tool beside the initial conversation is based on the Pulse and the tongue of the patient.

Bringing Chinese medicine to Israel's masses

Sapir's wife, Keren, also a CCM practitioner, directs East- West since Sapir is often traveling. "I trust her completely to run the whole show," he says. Two years ago, he took their two children, now 14 and 10½, on a month-long tour of China.

In an effort to bring CCM to the attention of a larger population

as a mode for complementary medical treatment, the Sapirs recently moved East-West into the leading organisation in Israel which combines a school and clinics in psychology and 20 geriatrics homes and hospitals as well as 20 medical care centres around Israel. "This cooperation will make us more available and accessible to everyone who needs us, and we can work in all of its centres throughout Israel," says Sapir.

He continues to lecture widely and teach in China - "Beijing is like my second home," he says.

One of his greatest accomplishments was helping to standardize the language of the discipline. Before the International Standard of Chinese- English Terminology of Chinese Medicine came out in 2009, "everyone translated the Chinese terms differently and this caused a lot of confusion. I couldn't talk to a practitioner in New York because we spoke a different language."

Not that languages are a hurdle for Sapir, whose leisure time reading is mostly in Chinese, on the country's culture and philosophy. To keep in shape, he enjoys swimming and tennis.

If you would like any further information contact Roni Sapir, email: roni@east-west.co.il This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.

JewishTimes Asia - September 2011

China solar panels for Israel

China based Suntech Holdings Company Ltd, the world's largest producer of solar panels, has unveiled a new generation of high-efficiency solar module called the Suntech 300W Vd series to target the Israeli market.

"The new module delivers 10% more power than conventional products

leading to lower balance-of-system and installation costs per watt," said James Hu, Suntech's president for Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa. "Israel's solar resources make the solar panels a viable and highly cost competitive energy solution that can help the country's energy independence," he added.

The product is ideally suited to rooftop installations where weight, power, and aesthetics are key customer considerations. The new solar module is available immediately for Israeli customers.

Jewish Times Asia - September 2011

Tiberiu Weisz linking Judaism into China's culture

As China's Kaifeng Jews recently became yeshiva students in Israel early this year, a series of overlooked stone inscriptions are bringing the story of Jews in China to life - Tiberiu Weisz investigates

Mr Weisz, or Tibi as he likes to be called, was born in Eastern Europe and made aliyah when he was 14. He served in the Israeli army for three years and then moved to the US. He took East Asian Studies and Chinese and followed by a same field Masters degree.

"My interest in China is a very long one," he says, "I was a student at Tunghai University in the mid 1970s and recorded Hebrew biblical texts at Tainan University."

In the US, Weisz taught Chinese as well as Chinese philosophy and religion at various Minneapolis Community Colleges and he also consulted with numerous international firms that were doing business in China. Weisz read Professor Vera Schwarcz's book *Bridge Across Broken Time: Chinese and Jewish Cultural Memory*, but felt "the topic needed much more work." He believed he was qualified to explore the subject in depth because he says, "I have an above average knowledge of Chinese and Hebrew and I also have a good background in Chinese history and biblical history. Above all, I can read classical Chinese and Hebrew fluently, including biblical Hebrew. So it was natural for me to take on this project and go with it." While teaching Chinese philosophy Weisz always felt the Chinese tenets were very similar to biblical literature and Judaism and he often wondered if the two might have come from the same source. The combination of his curiosity, interest and abilities led him to start writing his first book *The Covenant and the Mandate of Heaven: An In-Depth Comparative Cultural Study of Judaism and China*.

In his book, which is question-based, he gives answers relating to the connections between Judaism and China. The author uses Chinese and Hebrew texts, both translated to English "and placed side by side so the reader can easily see the similarities and the contradictions between the two cultures. It's like yin and yang. Readers will see these two cultures in a new light; not as fossils, but rather as two vibrant cultures tied by invisible bonds that have allowed



them to survive and flourish until today."

This is where the story becomes increasingly interesting. As part of his research for the book, Weisz came across the Kaifeng stone inscriptions, which had been reproduced and translated.

There are four stones carved with approximately 6000 Chinese characters in total. The first stone is from 1489, the second was carved in 1512 and the third and fourth in 1663.

According to Weisz, about 100 years ago there was a translation made by a Chinese missionary, which he says, "was pretty good, except nobody understood the text because it didn't make sense. We have these four documents that

had been put aside by researchers because the translation didn't make sense. For 500 years they went misunderstood." Even researcher Donald Leslie who had done extensive research on the stones couldn't understand why they were written.

Conversely Chinese researchers only addressed issues that they could understand. For example: where the stones speak about intermarriage, the arrival of the Jews in China and their assimilation. "This was because there was a sentence that said the Jews had come to China during the Sung Dynasty. Everybody was trying to figure out what that meant and did research on it and wrote about it, but that was the sum of the inscriptions."

"When I was reading the inscriptions I suddenly realized that what I was reading about was the pre-Talmudic time Judaism from about 300 BCE. That was interesting and it certainly got my attention." Weisz put his book *The Covenant...* on hold while he researched and translated the content of the stones in a deeper way.

Weisz realized that previous research "never explained or referred to the fact that the 1498 inscription was written in three different styles, because it was written by three different people. They never pointed out that the second inscription was written in very beautiful Chinese, in neo-Confucius style, that was very prevalent at the time of the Sung Dynasty. And for the third inscription, in the text it was written that the writer was a non-Jew, but what wasn't mentioned was that he was a neighbour of the Jews and he describes what he saw there, their

Jewish customs and behavior. That was fascinating and it was missing from the other translations."

He realized after hours of translation and comparison that the reason the inscriptions were not understood was "because they basically included the translation of prayers from Hebrew and that is what threw many people off. Unless you really know the biblical reference, you wouldn't know what they were talking about." And that is the reason why Weisz believes so many researchers thought the Chinese text on the stones was written a little bit funny. "I realized I was reading a Jewish manuscript." On the stones Weisz found the word for word translation from Hebrew into Chinese of "the entire Shemonei Esrei/ the Amidah. When I finally realized it and looked at the prayer book, it was just exciting. I didn't want to believe it at first, but then I realized there was no other way as all the components of the Amidah were there," he said.

The Birchat Kohanim - the priestly blessing is also part of the inscriptions. "The Birchat-Kohanim I figured out differently. I went to the Hebrew text and compared it. It is almost verbatim. It is written in Hebrew grammar but in Chinese words. All the biblical references were there." And finally, Weisz claims he found a third prayer, "which was the original biblical Aleinu."

In addition, the inscriptions also included multiple quotes from Chinese literature; among them

were quotes from Confucius and Lao Tzu. According to Weisz, the third part of the 1498 inscription clarified the timeline of "when the Jews came to China." The third segment reproduces a conversation that the Jews had with the Chinese emperor around 998 CE, about 500 years before the inscription was written; a conversation that was likely passed on through oral history.

Weisz theorises that the Chinese Jews are the original Jews who came to China over 1000 years ago. "They likely reached China at about 108 BC. They assimilated and kept their religion and beliefs. There was no anti-Semitism at that time and they were more like a curiosity. I think this is very important because I think it's the first time ever that the Jews flourished in a society without being prejudiced. The only other place they can do that now is Israel."

"So all this information was missing in the previous translations. As far as I'm concerned, I have a document here, which has been buried and is as important as the Dead Sea scrolls. But because they couldn't decipher it and they couldn't understand it, they put it aside and nobody really paid attention to it. I think it's time we looked at it very closely again. So I hope this new translation of the inscriptions will open up a new venue to do more research on the history of the Chinese Jews."

This research became Weisz's second book *The Kaifeng Stone Inscriptions: The legacy of the Jewish Community*

in Ancient China. The book contains the entire text of the new translation of the four stone inscriptions. The first part of the book is the new annotated translation that traces the origin of the Chinese text to biblical sources. Part two gives you a summary of the meaning of the inscriptions, and examines the origin of the community, their first encounter with the Chinese, their dedication to the temple and their life as Jews in the sea of Chinese culture.

The book incorporates many original Chinese and Hebrew sources and it highlights the cross-cultural currents that challenged the Israelites in China. It takes the reader into uncharted territory of the Jews in ancient China. Weisz is the first to note, "The inscriptions are definitely tied to Judaism and proof that they are a Jewish text."

The University of Southern California interviewed Weisz during the production of a documentary about the Jews of Kaifeng. At the time of the interview the project was in the final stages of editing.

It took Weisz ten years to research and write *The Covenant and the Mandate of Heaven*. In between, he stopped for four years to work on *The Kaifeng Stones Inscriptions*. Weisz took an early retirement and currently sits on the board of the Sino Judaica Institute. He will be speaking in Taiwan in October and is exploring potential joint projects with Tunghai University.

Jewish Times Asia (Issue September 2010)

Searching and Researching

**From: Judy Rogers -
justhomoans@optusnet.
com.au**

Subject: Jews of China

Good afternoon,

I was born in Tientsin in 1949, the

youngest of three children.

My parents are Israel and Liah Zeitlin. Do you have any information about the Zeitlin family in Harbin, Tientsin, Peking or Tomsk Siberia?

I would dearly love to receive some information. Both my parents have

passed away.

Best regards

Just Home & Commercial Loans
Unit 1, 6 Turner Avenue
Glenhuntly 3163

8 August 2011

Journal of a Jewish Traveller

By Israel Cohen

Japan

The first sight that struck me as I entered the saloon of the steamer that was to take me from Shanghai to Kobe was a couple of Japanese gentlemen, one in European dress and the other in a kimono, bending down towards one another, with their backs almost at right angles to their legs, and their heads just alongside of each other. They glanced at one another solemnly through the corner of their eyes, raised their backs slightly, then slowly lowered them, trying once more to outdo each other in their downward progression. Silently and stolidly they went through the same stooping movements with mechanical jerks, six or seven times, as though executing some religious rite. Presently another Japanese gentleman indulged in the same performance with a lady compatriot in native dress, and I began to revise my opinion of its significance, when a loquacious young Chinaman, who had learned English in Hongkong, explained to me that it was the Japanese mode of courteous salutation, the less important of the two persons always stooping an inch or two lower than the other. This mode of obeisance could obviously be practised more successfully before a meal than after, but fortunately it was not expected of a foreigner at any time.

I was the only European on board the little Japanese vessel, which had a full complement of Japanese and Chinese passengers, but both the captain and the stewards spoke English tolerably well. My cabin was shared by two young Japanese, who lay wrapped in their kimonos in their berths, one above the other the greater part of the

day, carrying on what may have been a philosophical duologue and filling the air with the nauseating fumes of amber cigarettes. The voyage was rough and cold, but fortunately brief, for on the third day we reached Moji at the entrance to the Inland Sea. I had first intended visiting Nagasaki to see the pretty little synagogue of which I had heard, but as its Jewish community had dwindled to four or five souls and the journey thither from Moji and back would have taken nearly two days, I decided that, with the limited time at my disposal, it would be best to remain on board and make straight for Kobe. The famed beauty of the Inland Sea was veiled by a grey sky and the melancholy of winter, and the first romantic view of Kobe that I had fondly pictured to myself was eclipsed by the somber reality of gaunt factory-chimneys and a deluge of rain that would have quenched the ardour even of the most sentimental traveller. The only novel feature attaching to my landing was supplied by the passenger-list affixed to the notice-board, for there my name stood out alone in Latin characters, surrounded by festoons of hieroglyphics denoting the patronymics of the Celestial voyagers. I was welcomed by Mr. Walter Buechler (son of Dr. Adolf Buechler, the Principal of Jews College), who was armed with a big yellow oilskin umbrella, and soon we were trundled along muddy roads to the hotel in closed rickshaws furnished with oilskin windows, which had a fleeting resemblance to the hansoms of bygone days.

There was no organized Jewish community in Kobe, although there

were said to be about 200 Jews in the city. Half of them were from England, America and Bagdad, having businesses of their own or representing foreign firms; the other half were fugitives from Russia, waiting either to return after the Bolshevik chaos was over or to cross the Pacific and seek their fortunes in America. The recognized head of the Russia colony was a Mr. Yabroff, who had succeeded in bringing over the family samovar, which did as good service in his new home as ever it had done in its old. Within his house I almost forgot I was in Japan, for the languages spoken were English, Russian and Yiddish, and the dishes and drinks were all reminiscent of the Ghetto. There I met a rubicund, grey-haired teacher of music, enjoying the courtesy title of professor, who made quite a fair livelihood by giving lessons and concerts, and who seemed none the worse for his exile. Although uncertain of the future, the Russians were resolved to make the most of the present, for they - Jews and non-Jews combined - had created a little club for social intercourse and entertainment, which had acquired immediate favour. It was situated in the upper part of a private house, and consisted of one long room, at the farther end of which was a little stage curtained off. There I spent my first evening after dining with some friends (two brothers named Goldman, of London), who told me how charmed they were with the scenery of the land and how annoyed by the xenophobia of its people. Two Russian one-act comedies were performed, of which a brief explanation in English was previously

given by the producer for the benefit of those who did not understand the language. They each presented a case of illicit love - reflecting the moral anarchy precipitated by the Russian political upheaval - and they were afterwards followed by some singing and fancy dancing. In the middle of the entertainment there was a sudden howl of the wind, the house shook, and the electric light went out for a moment or two. "It's only a typhoon in the neighborhood", remarked my neighbour. "Don't be alarmed". The lights went up again, and the artists concluded an eccentric dance amid frenzied applause.

It was impossible to convene a meeting at short notice in such a small and unorganized community, so I decided first to go to Yokohama for a few days and, upon my return, to address a meeting which could meanwhile be arranged. But before leaving for Yokohama I spent a couple of days in visiting various Jews in their offices and trying to obtain donations for the Palestine Fund. The response was at first feeble and fitful, as was perhaps inevitable in the frigid zone in which Judaism was here situated. "Palestine is a rather long way off from here," said one merchant who had long been domiciled in Kobe. "Yes," I replied, "and I have come all that long way to enable you to do your duty". Each man upon whom I called was kind enough to give me the names and addresses of two or three others, while imploring me not to betray the source of my information, and thus the list slowly improved. Two men whom I visited brought home to me the tragic consequences of the isolation of the little Jewish colony. One was married to a Japanese wife, but he pretended to bear no relationship to his slant-eyed Eurasian son, who remained mute and timid throughout the conversation, and whose identity was whispered to me by the friend who accompanied me. He even pretended that he was only

on a visit to Kobe and that his home was in London; but having received a little proof of his generosity, I was unwilling to impugn his veracity. The other case was that of a man who was himself the offspring of an English Jew and a Japanese mother. His name was undisguisedly Jewish, but his features were unmistakably Japanese and his views were suspiciously anti-Semitic. "I'm no Jew," he said, with a foreign accent, "though my father was one. I'm a Japanese and a freethinker, and I don't agree with your mission. Religion is a curse, and if you were raising money to fight it, I should be glad to help you". Evidently his free-thought was not liberal thought. A few months later I met his father in Burmah; he looked like a typical West End Jew, though he had left London over thirty years ago. There were only a few cases of such Judeo-Japanese marriages, the social ostracism that they involved serving as sufficient deterrent to their increase.

On the morning after my arrival the hotel clerk told me that the chief of the foreign section of the police would call upon me in the afternoon. I asked him how the police knew of me, to which he candidly replied that he always reported the arrival of foreigners, especially - with a grin - if they appeared to be persons of importance.

The functionary who called was a dapper little gentleman in black frock-coat, who bowed deferentially and made himself at home in my room. He opened the conversation by saying he was a student of social conditions in foreign countries, and was therefore anxious to learn from me of the latest developments in England; but when I pointed out that he could always get the information he sought from the press or from the Japanese Consulate in London, he admitted that he was curious about my visit. He spoke English slowly but correctly, and I thought that I should have no difficulty in explaining to

him the nature and purpose of my mission; but his ignorance of things Jewish was abysmal, and it was not until after an hour's penetrating cross-examination that he at last expressed himself contented. I had to give him quite a lecture upon the Jewish diaspora, Jewish nationalism, Jewish sufferings and aspirations, Great Britain, Palestine and the Balfour Declaration, and after I had inwardly congratulated myself upon enlightening him, he innocently asked: "And where is this Palestine, in England?" I was speechless with amazement.

"Oh, I see," he corrected himself, "it is in Poland".

I took an atlas and showed him the exact position of the Holy Land. He gazed at it like a little Columbus. Having convinced himself that Zionism was not Bolshevism - for that was his underlying fear - he made me describe the whole of my itinerary from the day I left London, as well as all the details of my stay in Japan. He even inquired by what train I should leave for Yokohama, in what hotel and how long I would stay there, what other towns I would visit, when I would return, and whither I would then go. He wrote down the hour of the train by which I was to leave Kobe that evening, but he thoughtlessly left the note behind him - and I thoughtfully tore it into tiny tatters.

After an all-night journey in a comfortable though rather smelly sleeping-car, I reached Yokohama early the following morning. The berths were ranged in a double tier along both sides of a long compartment, a gangway running through the middle. Both men and women slept in the same compartment, but the berths were curtained off so completely that it was impossible to detect the sex of one's neighbour either above, below or opposite. A neatly uniformed train "boy" provided one with a coat-

hanger at night, and brushed one's boots and clothes in the morning. As we approached the city there was snow on the ground, and I was rudely reminded that my visions of cherry-blossom and chrysanthemums would not be realized unless I prolonged my stay for a few months.

The Jewish community of Yokohama was somewhat larger than that of Kobe, comprising about 300 persons altogether. Less than half constituted the resident element, commercial folk of varied degree, hailing from England and America, from the Levant and Bagdad, conducting business with all parts of the world. This element dated back nearly fifty years, the oldest member an English Jew, upon whom I called the first day, having a Japanese wife, with a son whose maternal origin was unmistakably evident. The larger portion of the community consisted of refugees from Russia, whose number in the previous year had been much greater. The refugees had all come across from Vladivostok, between which and Tsuruga there were weekly sailings, and the poorer among them had been looked after by an agent of the Joint Distribution Committee of America, which had opened a Jewish Immigrants' Hostel in a large house in Main Street. The Hostel comprised not only dining-rooms, dormitories and reading-room, but also a small synagogue equipped with an Ark of the Law. By the end of 1920 some hundreds of refugees had already been shipped to America, and as it was thought that the Jews in Siberia had now become accustomed to the prevalent state of alarm and unrest, the help of the American Committee was gradually reduced, its agent was recalled home, and a small committee of the richer exiles assumed the care of their poorer brethren. Those who had salvaged anything of their property had opened up trade with Siberia and China; the others lived on the charity of their fellows, and were provided in

turn with passages to San Francisco. I often met some of them in Main Street, where a little kosher restaurant had been opened; and I saw them too, in the lounge of the Grand Hotel, where, as the little Japanese maids shuffled about daintily with lacquer tea-trays, they sat gazing through the vast expanse of window at the ships of all nations that came into the harbour, and listening to the orchestra that included some of their co-religionists.

It was Friday when I arrived, and as I wished to address a meeting on Sunday afternoon, and no preparations had yet been made, there was no time to lose. The meeting could not take place without the express permission of the local authorities, so I at once wrote a letter to the Chief of Police, informing him of the purpose of the proposed gathering, which was to take place in the Immigrants' Hostel; and thereupon I called upon the British Consul, who readily agreed to send a note to the police in support of my application. Anticipating that permission could not possibly be refused, I went to the offices of the two local English papers, the Japan Gazette and the Japan Advertiser, and handed the editors an announcement of the forthcoming meeting, to which they gave prominence in their next issue.

Early next morning, before I had completed my toilet, there was a rap on my door, followed by the entrance of a plain-clothes policeman with a polite invitation to call upon his Chief at eleven o'clock. I went to the police-station in the company of Mr. Solomon Goldberg (a brother of the well-known Zionists, Messrs. Isaac and Boris Goldberg), who told me that a policeman had been at the hostel at eight o'clock that morning and cross-examined the superintendent as to the purport of the meeting announced. We were cordially received by the Chief of the Police, a thick-set individual in gold-braided uniform, wearing spectacles

that softened his bureaucratic sternness. He was just as much at sea about the meaning of Zionism as his colleague in Kobe, but with the aid of an interpreter and a secretary who deferentially acted as intermediaries, I succeeded in making him grasp the nature of my mission in half the time. During our interview, which took place in a chilly room, two portable braziers were brought in so that we could warm our hands, and the fear seized me that I was to be subjected to a prolonged catechism. In a room above there was a great deal of banging, beating, firing and shouting, which made me think that political prisoners were being tortured there. The Police Chief seems to be interested just as much in my personal movements as in the Zionist movement, and the secretary made careful note of all my replies. At length, after I had satisfied him that Zionism had nothing to do either with Socialism or Bolshevism - Socialism being feared as much as Bolshevism, and violently suppressed by the Government - and also that I had no intention of floating a loan in Japan, he declared that he would permit the meeting, but would send two representatives to hear me. I replied that he could pay me no greater honour unless he would attend himself, an invitation that he smilingly declined. Outside the building Mr. Goldberg explained that the noise on the upper floor was due to the training of the police in revolver practice, ju-jitsu and other arts of self-defence.

Fate dealt rather unkindly with the meeting, from which I had expected so much. It rained heavily that afternoon, so that none but hardy spirits would venture forth. Assembled in the Hostel synagogue, which was festively decorated with Zionist banners, were about fifty persons, including two policemen, two Japanese journalists and a number of Russian refugees, while the rest consisted of English-speaking

Jews and a few Christians. I asked the oldest Anglo-Jewish resident, who was present, to take the chair, but he frankly told me that he came only as "the figure-head of the community" - a modest self-appraisal - out of compliment to myself, but did not intend identifying himself with my mission. Another gentleman, therefore, introduced me, and I had scarcely begun my address when one of the journalists took a flashlight photograph of me - perhaps at the suggestion of the police. I spoke rather briefly; first in English and then in Yiddish; but as soon as I began my appeal and looked significantly in the direction of the oldest Anglo-Jewish resident, the latter rose to his full height, with the eyes of the whole assembly upon him, and stalked haughtily out of the building into the street.

But despite this discouraging prelude, the gathering yielded £200, which I subsequently succeeded, by dint of private calls, in increasing by half as much again. Several of those present were inmates of the Hostel, who were unable to give anything but themselves for the rebuilding of Palestine, and they eagerly declared their willingness to go in any capacity. One man, who had been director of a big bank in Russia, and who had lost his position through Soviet economics, was prepared to go out as a clerk. My visits to those who were absent from the meeting were paid in the company of Mr. Goldberg, who ferreted out many strange addresses, and who, as we sped along side by side in rickshaws, advised me how to tackle each person in turn. I called upon the oldest Anglo-Jewish resident alone, but the visit was fruitless. He declared that he must reserve his bounty for local needs, as poor Jews were always passing through the port, and he sought to convince me of the demands upon his purse by producing a copy of the by-laws of the Yokohama Jewish Benevolent Association, founded

some twenty years before. Another English Jew, whose father had been an orthodox communal worker in London, and who had anglicized his name beyond recognition, told me candidly that he was a free-thinker and utterly indifferent to the fate both of Israel and the Land of Israel; but out of respect for the memory of his pious father he contributed something.

The most annoying experience that I had was with a young Russian Jew, who conducted a successful money exchange. It was closing time as I entered his office, and he showed me little boxes crammed with bank notes of various colours, countries and currencies, hugging those of English with tight embrace and shaking his head mournfully over the worthless batches of Russian roubles. One by one he placed the boxes into a huge safe in a strongly secured room, turned and tried lock after lock with care, and led me then to his private room for our interview. I had scarce touched upon the purport of my visit when he left me and briskly returned to the strong-room. One by one I heard the locks being turned again; the sharp click of the closing of the safe re-echoed through the empty office; and the vision of a substantial bank-note floated before me. He came back jauntily, seated himself opposite me with an air of smug satisfaction, and saying, "I cannot resist your appeal," tendered me a five-yen note (then worth fifteen shillings). The pettiness of the amount was a flagrant insult. I flung the note back and left him.

Much more agreeable was the experience I had in relation to a Christian missionary, the Rev. O. St. M. Forester and his wife, who attended my meeting. Mr. Forester showed me a greenstone signet-ring that he was wearing, with the Hebrew inscription *Shalu Shalom Yerushalayim* ("Seek ye the peace of Jerusalem"), and told me that it had belonged to his wife's grandfather.

"And who was he?" I asked.

"Michael Solomon Alexander, the first Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem," was the reply. "Have you heard of him? He had a rather romantic history. He was born of pious Jewish parents in Posen at the end of the 18th century, went to England as a young man, became a minister of the Hebrew congregation at Plymouth, and a few years later both he and his wife converted to Christianity. He was afterwards ordained Bishop of the United Church of England and Ireland at Jerusalem, and he had the supervision of the English clergy and congregations in the whole of the Near East. The last four years of his life he spent in Jerusalem, and he died in Egypt when on his way home to England. That explains our interest in Zionism."

The Foresters invited me to lunch one day at their pleasant home overlooking the sea, in a suburb where Mr. Forester acted as missionary to the local Chinese colony. Although not of Jewish descent like his wife, Mr. Forester also boasted of a kind of link with Jewry, for he was the nephew of the two charming sisters, Lady Bradford and Lady Chesterfield, to whom Disraeli addressed love-letters after his wife's death, as chronicled in the pages of Money-penny and Buckle's great biography. They displayed a very keen interest in the progress of Palestine, and in the general welfare of the Jewish people. Mrs. Forester, who wore a little golden Magen David, also an heirloom, was proud of her racial origin and was anxious to be enlightened about the relations of Jews to Bolshevism, so as to be able to refute the stories of Hebrew tyranny in Russia which circulated in the East as in the West. Her zeal was a form of psychological atavism. She told me that she had recently had a visit from an English girl who had fled from Russia, and who told blood-curdling tales of the omnipresent Jewish commissaries. "I could smell

a Jew or anybody with Jewish blood at a mile, and it would turn me sick," the girl had said. "But I am of Jewish blood," rejoined Mrs. Forester, "and proud of it."

The girl, at first incredulous, made a humble apology to the lady whose help and hospitality she had received. As I was about to leave, Mr. Forester, unsolicited, gave me a cheque for £10 for the Palestine Fund, and a Christian friend who was present also gave a token of practical sympathy.

I was the object of considerable curiosity on the part of the native press, especially after the circulation by the Kokusai news agency of the following sensational paragraph:

"A meeting of the Jewish residents in Japan was held yesterday at the office of the Jewish Association in Yokohama, in order to consider the proposed establishment of the Kingdom of Palestine (reports a Yokohama dispatch to the Tokyo Asahi). The meeting was presided over by Mr. Israel Cohen, and was attended by some two hundred Jewish residents. After an hour's conference in camera an agreement was reached, it is reported, to establish a kingdom for the Jews."

A Kobe paper, which reproduced this paragraph, facetiously remarked: "It is not stated which of the two hundred gentlemen present is to wear the crown." It was perhaps for the purpose of unravelling this secret and securing a "scoop" that so many journalists came to see me at the hotel; but as they all spoke English badly and I spoke Japanese not at all, they were none the wiser after tendering me their professional cards. One disreputable-looking individual began by addressing me in Russian, whereupon I at once suspected that he was a police agent bent upon discovering by a language test whether I was not really an emissary of Lenin and Trotsky. Another caller inquired whether I had received a visit from a colleague whom he named, and upon my taking some

papers out of my pocket to look for the latter's card, he made a grab at the papers, which I immediately thrust back again, and he retired baffled.

But on the eve of my departure the police sent a declared representative once more. He was announced as I was busily engaged in packing, so I secured my trunk, locked the door and went to see him in the lounge. He offered an elaborate apology in the name of his chief for troubling me again, but would I kindly tell him how much money I had collected and what were the names of those who had given? Upon hearing the amount he affected to be surprised at what he considered to be such a large sum, and entered it into a notebook; but as for the list of subscribers, I pleaded that I had already sent it to London. He even mentioned the names of certain people, and wished to know their respective donations, but I confessed ignorance of their existence and reproached him for not having supplied me with those names upon my arrival. There could be little doubt that his inquiries were prompted by a solicitude for the inland revenue.

Limitations of time prevented me from spending more than a day in Tokyo. There were no Jews to see there, for the only Jewish resident, the editor of an American paper, was away in the States. But I wished to call upon the British Ambassador to discuss certain questions, and likewise desired to see something of the capital. I was accompanied by a native guide from Yokohama, who displayed remarkable deference to me. He asked whether I was the Mr. Cohen about whom the Japanese press had been writing, and upon receiving my answer, said that he considered it a great honour to be conducting the cousin of the King of England!

"How do you make that out?" I asked astonished.

"Well, the papers say that you are

going to make a kingdom in Palestine, which belongs to England, and so they suppose you are the cousin of the King of England."

I was loth to dispel such a flattering delusion, although I believed that my cicerone was not quite so credulous as some of his countrymen. When we approached the Imperial Palace, which is hidden behind a wall twenty feet high and surrounded by a moat twenty feet wide, a sentry forbade me to use my camera, and my unquestioned obedience must have convinced my companion that mine was but a commoner's blood after all. He took me to the Shiba Park, a large, well-wooded area dotted with shrines and temples, tombs and mausolea, pagodas and monuments, lake and pleasure-gardens; and then, with my boots encased in large felt slippers, I paced the galleries of some of the mortuary temples of the picturesque Shoguns - the mighty generals who ruled the land for seven centuries - what time a shaven-headed bonze explained in broken English the peculiarities of the antique architecture and the symbolism of the bizarre decorations and sculptures, profuse with gilded dragons, phoenixes and polychromatic peonies.

At the British Embassy, which is surrounded by a lofty wall, though not so stupendous or cannon-proof as that encircling the British Legation in Peking, I had a chat with the Ambassador, Sir Charles Eliot, who was greatly interested in my mission and travels. We discussed the question of the possible emigration of Russian Jews from Yokohama to Palestine; and then Sir Charles, after inquiring about his Jewish friends in Hongkong, where he had formerly been Principal of the University, told me of a visit that he had once paid to the Cochin Jews near Madras, and advised me to include that ancient community within my itinerary. One of the officials at the Embassy whom I met, Mr. Starkie, had more than a

newspaper knowledge of Zionism, for he had worked at the Foreign Office under the late Sir Mark Sykes in the stirring days when that political idealist helped to fashion and secure the Balfour Declaration.

From the Embassy, my guide conducted me to the Imperial Museum, but it was closing; and so, after driving around the Imperial University, which occupies a group of semi-classical buildings, whence 365 professors and lecturers spread modern learning throughout the Far East, we went to the huge department store of Mitsukoshi. It is a stately, concrete edifice in the Renaissance style, stocked with multifarious wares displayed as in a Western emporium. The native shoppers had to leave their wooden sandals in the entrance hall and were given straw slippers, as all the floors were covered with mats which had to be protected from rough wear. European visitors had cloth slippers put over their boots; and more than a dozen attendants were busy all the time looking after the feet of all who came in or passed out. The most interesting spectacle in the building that I saw was a woman suddenly sink upon her knees and begin to suckle a lusty boy, who stood embracing her, whilst people walked past unnoticed, as though that were a common scene. My guide ascertained that the suckling was two and a half years of age, and told me that it was no unusual thing for Japanese mothers to nurse their children until they had completed their third year. We rounded off the day by strolling through the famous Asakusa Park, a motley exhibition ground containing the infamous Yoshiwara; and by a visit later to the Imperial Theatre, where the play began at four in the afternoon and continued with intervals until eleven o'clock, but where my patience and curiosity, after gazing at a medieval pantomimic performance extolling patriotic virtues and martial valour, were exhausted after ninety minutes.

On the way to the railway station, my attention was attracted by a pleasant tintinnabulation, which I found proceeded from a newsboy who, after the national custom of his calling, had a cluster of bells round his waist to advertise his papers. We bought the Kokumin, which proved to contain a snapshot of myself taken in the Yokohama synagogue and surrounded by masses of picturesque reading-matter.

Another night journey by train brought me to the Mikado's quaint old capital, Kyoto, where the eye could feast upon far more scenes of beauty than in the larger and more frequented cities. It is a place of peace, piety and ineffable charm, where the genius of the land still holds its own against the inroads of Occidental civilization. Its shrines are ornate and elaborate fabrics - though none so grand and awe-inspiring as the Temple of Heaven in Peking - encircled by landscape gardens and cloistral groves, in which one finds curiously gnarled trees and tall stone lanterns. At two of these Buddhist temples a service was in progress: in the one a bald-headed priest on his knees struck a gong after each verse droned out by a swarm of fellow-priests; whilst in the other, thronged with a concourse of students preparing for the sacred calling, one of the leaders in prayer tapped a little drum to mark the end of each invocation. The workshops were not less interesting than the temples; the craftsmen that I saw squatting at their benches, silently intent upon their work in tidy and speckled rooms, were as conscientious as the priests. I watched them fashioning wonderful wares in lacquer, cloisonné and damascene, and as I sipped a dainty cup of pale aromatic tea - which it would have been discourteous to refuse - I was tempted to purchase more than one object held alluringly before my gaze.

But my primary reason for coming to

Kyoto was not to study its fascinating sights, but to call upon an unknown lady who had sent me a letter through the editor of the Japan Chronicle. Her name was the Hon. Mrs. E. A. Gordon, and she wrote that she had been interested in Zionism since Dr. Herzl's time, and was a friend of many years' standing of Mr. L. J. Greenberg (editor of the Jewish Chronicle). "Although I am not a Jewess," her letter continued, "I have long worked for the cause, and believe strongly that these Japanese are part of the Tribes, and possess some of the proof heirlooms. 'Next year in Jerusalem!' is about to come true, and we must stir up Japanese interest."

The curiosity aroused by this missive was fully gratified. I found Mrs. Gordon an interesting old lady, lying on a couch, crippled with neuritis, yet mentally alert. She told me that she had been an ardent sympathizer with the Zionist cause from its earliest days, and was anxious to learn what progress had been made with its practical realization. She had lived in China and Japan for several years, knows the languages of both countries, and tried to prove her strange theory that the Japanese are part of the Lost Ten Tribes by advancing various data respecting names and customs, which seemed to me easily explicable on the ground of accidental similarity. She said that a few years ago Professor Pysacki of the Waseda University, Tokyo, wrote a book on The Nestorian Monument in China (published by the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge), in which he showed that the Chinese word "Ta-chin" used by the Nestorian monument for Syria, corresponded to the Japanese Uzumasa, the name of a village in which was situated a well, 1400 years old, marked "Israel" in Chinese characters. Recently a new well was constructed in the same village, incised with the same characters "Israel". In this village, on a certain midnight, the inhabitants eat flat

rice-cakes called Mochi (supposed to be the same word as Matzo), an observance named "Victory over the Rice-Bread." Furthermore, in the Inland Sea, about a couple of hours sail from Kobe, there is a shrine called "O-ho-saki" which means "Beloved" and as David also has the same meaning, Mrs. Gordon styles it "David's Shrine". In the vicinity of this temple are villages named "Goshe" and "Menasseh" and there also used to be a shrine called "Ephraim".

But there were even some stranger pieces of "evidence" drawn both from ancient and modern times. About the year 96 of the Common Era, a Jewish cenobite named Jun-tu-la was recorded to have come to Kai-feng-fu, where later the well-known Jewish colony flourished. In the year 370 a Tibetan monk name Jundo ("Follower of the Way"), who was sent by the Emperor of China to the Northern Kingdom of China, came to Pin-yang where he founded two Buddhist Temples, one of which, according to Professor Anesaki of the Imperial University of Tokyo, was styled "Ilfullan" a word that was rendered "Ephraim" on the Nestorian stone. As for modern times, Mrs. Gordon was told that at the coronation of the late Emperor of Japan the merchants of Osaka hung out flags with Hebrew letters. But what she vouched for herself was even more romantic. She said that at Ise there are two shrines, built after the model of the Biblical Tabernacle, one consecrated to Earth and the other to Heaven, which are renewed every twenty years from the choicest woods of the Emperor's forest. Nobody except the Emperor may contribute the timber, but ordinary folk could give plain white stones. The treasures are then removed in the darkness of night by blindfolded priests from the old shrines to the new, whilst the scene is illuminated by torches (though how the priests can see what they are about I fail to understand). Mrs. Gordon stated that

she witnessed such a ceremony a few years ago, when a French lady who was present exclaimed "Les rideaux!" - the curtains of the shrine being said to be like those of the Tabernacle.

This stream of curious information came pouring without pause from the lips of the old lady, as she lay helpless on her couch. Her mind went back to the days of Queen Victoria, whom she had served as a Lady-in -Waiting; she told me that the late Queen was a believer in the British-Israel theory and insisted that the newly born son of the then Duke of York, that is, the present Prince of Wales, should be named David, because it was he who was destined to lead the Jews back to Palestine. As I was about to leave she reached over to a table beside her and presented me with the two works of hers, in which she had written : "With the Author's best wishes for Zionism. Kyoto - 'The City of Peace' " One was an entertaining volume of travel, Clear Round! written thirty years ago, and giving a graphic description of life and customs in the Far East; the other, entitled The Lotus Gospel, was a comparative study in Buddhist and Christian theology, with mystical diagrams and references to Jewish lore. She also gave me a small black leather case containing a few photographs that she had treasured for many a year. Three of them were photographs of the Prince of Wales taken at different periods of his childhood, the first as a month-old babe on his mother's lap. At the back of the photograph of the Prince, when an infant of two in petticoats, was pasted a picture postcard of Herzl, with his name in Hebrew, published by a pre-war firm in Warsaw.

The conversation had been so absorbing that I suddenly realized there was scarcely sufficient time to catch my train to Kobe. The rickshawman flew with me through highways and byways by the quickest rout at a madcap speed that soon caused streams of perspiration to trickle all

over him, and upon arriving at the station he panted piteously. But he had enabled me to board the train on time and he was content with his reward.

A few months later I was in Jerusalem, and upon relating to the High Commissioner my experiences in Japan, he told me that he had just received from Mrs. Gordon a cheque for £500 to be distributed at his discretion among various deserving purposes. A few months later still I narrated my experience to Mr. L. J. Greenberg, who then disclosed the interesting fact that the donor of the £2000 which had enabled the Zionist Organization in 1903 to send a commission of investigation to the territory of British East Africa offered by the British Government for an autonomous Jewish settlement was the self-same Mrs. Gordon.

Arrived in Kobe once more on the Sabbath eve, I was met by Mr. Yabroff, who told me that the police permission had meanwhile been obtained for the meeting, which would take place that evening in the synagogue. It was the first time that I had heard there was a Jewish place of worship in the town, but it was immediately explained that it was situated in a private house. Mr. Yabroff took me to his home, where the Sabbath candles gleamed on a snow-white cloth, and a repast was served of truly traditional quality, with lockshen soup, stewed carp and boiled chicken.

When we entered the synagogue, a large room on the upper floor of a humble dwelling, we found a few friends already waiting together with two police representatives in plain clothes. The shrine was plainly furnished, with a simple Ark and reading-desk made by a local carpenter, whilst on the walls were displayed Zionist flags. My address was brief, and it was followed by a fervid appeal in Russian by Mr. Yabroff for the enlightenment of

those who could not understand me. Various donations were promised, which, together with the amounts already contributed, brought up the total for Kobe to £200. The formation of a Zionist Society was then formally resolved upon, and glowing hopes were expressed for its future; but owing to the fluctuating character of the little Jewish colony those hopes failed to blossom.

Once again I made an all-night journey, with Shimonoseki as my destination. At Yokohama I had repeatedly discussed the advisability

of sailing from Tsuruga to Vladivostok, when I wished to reach Harbin; but so many strange tales were poured into my ears about the Bolshevik sailors of the ship on which I would have to sail, about the uncertainty of landing at Vladivostok, about the insecurity of life in that city, and about the oft-interrupted connection with Harbin, that I resolved to omit Vladivostok and to travel to Harbin through Seoul and Mukden. I had scarcely stepped out of the train at Shimonoseki than I was approached by a smiling young fellow, who first

addressed me in Russian, and upon my replying that I did not understand, immediately asked me in English for my papers of identification. The sight of my British passport evoked a momentary expression of deference. But the dapper little detective was not satisfied until he followed me into the local hotel, where I made a hurried breakfast, and catechized me in detail concerning all my movements of the last ten days. At length he released me, baring his teeth with a farewell smile, and I boarded a Japanese steamer for Fusan.

China's top military general visits Israel

Army General Chen Bingde, made an official visit to Israel this 14 August, his first trip to Israel.

According to local reports his visit was seen as historic and a sign of growing ties between the two countries. Israel's Defense Minister Ehud Barak was recently in China for an official visit in June.

General Chen Bingde, met with Israel's Defense Minister Ehud Barak, Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz and other military leaders.

They discussed their mutual struggle against global terrorism, geopolitics in Pakistan and Iran and their shared connections with the Palestinians, a media statement announced.

Barak spoke about the principles China and Israel share despite their differences: "We are two ancient peoples with history and tremendous impact on world civilization. China is a continent [but] Israel hardly appears on the world map," Barak said to General Bingde, according to the statement.

Barak made a rare visit to Beijing for

talks with Chinese leaders "at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart Liang Guanglie," It was the first visit of an Israeli defense minister to China in a decade.

Israeli-Sino relations have occasionally been strained in recent years. Israel is concerned about China's ties to Iran and its possible selling of arms to Arab states. On the other hand, Israeli companies are forbidden to sell weaponry to China's military and defense ties between the two were downgraded due to American pressure.

Yet the visit ushers in a sense of cooperation and economic opportunity between the two countries, particularly as the Middle East becomes enveloped by the Arab Spring and China may be reexamining its foreign policies towards the region.

Bilateral trade between China and

Israel reached US\$6.7 billion in 2010. China is interested in oil export and possible transport routes to Europe - a role Israel can fulfill because of its location on the Mediterranean Sea.

Israel, for its part, is interested in China's seat on the United Nations Security Council, the independent body that passes sanctions against Iran for its nuclear programme. Israel is also trying to show China and other countries that the Palestinian bid for a unilateral declaration of independence at the U.N. in September is counterproductive to peace and harmful to direct negotiations.

Jewish Times Asia - September 2011



General Chen Bingde

Old American breaks bagels in China

By Ron Gluckman /Beijing

Among the last of a dying breed of fervent American fans of Communism, is one aged author who explores the mysteries of the ancient Jews of Kaifeng. Fitting, because a half century after leaving New York for the People's Republic, he's probably the oldest Jew in China

AMONG INNUMERABLE CURIOSITIES curiosities interwoven in the long, mutually-rich history of two of the world's oldest peoples is the vexing question of where and when they first met. The answer, according to most historians, is well over a thousand years ago. Evidence suggests the initial interaction likely occurred as Jewish traders migrated along the Silk Road, eventually reaching the ancient city of Kaifeng. How and why they came to Kaifeng, and what happened to them has long been a topic of debate, not only amongst scholars. Marco Polo noted Jewish residents in 13th Century reports from China. The first Jesuit missionaries posted to China four hundred years ago enthusiastically described the discovery of a lost tribe of Chinese Jews in Kaifeng, but admitted bafflement over their exact origins.

Few clues remain in Kaifeng, a Henan Province city that was Imperial capital during the Song Dynasty. Kaifeng isn't unique. Hangzhou, Luoyang, Quanzhou, Nanjing and Ninbo also claimed ancient Jewish settlements. Kaifeng, though was the largest. In Kaifeng, Jews built a synagogue (temple), but all traces of it and their settlement long ago vanished

The Jesuits sent researchers to Kaifeng to try to unravel the mystery. They had no more luck than European Jews from Shanghai at the turn of the century, and more recent teams from

as far away as Israel and America. All were hot for signs of Jewish heritage but the trail in Kaifeng has long gone ice cold. A warmer path leads through the ancient alleyways of central Beijing, where, inside a small, traditional Chinese house, lives author Sidney Shapiro – who unquestionably claims the oldest remaining Jewish household in all of China.

Shapiro doesn't claim to know all the answers about what befell the Jews in old China. Still, few know more about the Kaifeng Jews better than Shapiro, who also is the world's leading authority on an old Jew in New China - himself.

Shapiro a former New Yorker, who has resided in China since in 1947, is author of many books, including two on these topics. Both have been out for years, but recently reappeared in new form. Shapiro's "Jews in Old China," a collection of papers by Chinese scholars about the Kaifeng Jews, was reissued this year (Hippocrene Books; 256 pages; \$14.95) with three new chapters. Shapiro's 1997 autobiography, "My China: The Metamorphosis of a Country and a Man," previously available mainly in China, has been reissued as "I Chose China." (Hippocrene, 355 pages; \$24.95)

Despite a few connections, the books are really as different as night and day. "Jews in Old China" is an ambitious academic work that endeavors to collect and translate into English everything written about the Kaifeng Jews in Chinese. As such, it is an unparalleled undertaking, since few of these essays are familiar even to western scholars with a special interest in this subject.

However, "Jews in Old China" is also the more disappointing of the books, though not because of any

fault of the author. Shapiro visited Kaifeng and spent years tracking down and translating these papers, but the essays suffer from extensive repetition and skimpy detail. The Kaifeng Jews left behind only a few ancient inscriptions. These details are recounted endlessly by Chinese scholars with, at best, limited knowledge of Jews and their various migrations. That's understandable, seeing as most scholars in China have had no access to such basic materials as the bible or Talmud for decades.

"I Chose China," in contrast, tackles an enormous topic - the past half-century of Chinese history - but achieves fine focus by telling the story of one observer. It's by no means comprehensive, nor does it pretend to be an authoritative behind-the-scenes look at the People's Republic of China. It's simply the life story of an individual in remarkable surroundings at a clear turning point in history.

Not that Shapiro should be considered a minor character in modern China. He still enjoys considerable insight into the nation's political machinery as a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council. Since 1963, he has been a citizen of China. Although never a member of the Communist Party, he's among the last of a small collection of quixotic foreign sympathizers who came during its underground days and stayed on after the establishment of the PRC.

Long retired from the state-run Foreign Language Press, Shapiro, now 85, still spends days at his computer, batting out letters, working on book projects, or navigating the web. He is spry and lucid, joking loudly, and often, but always with a gentile manner. He serves tea and peanuts – standard People's fare – in

his chilly courtyard home of 40 years. It's packed with well-worn furniture and one concession to his homeland, Louis Armstrong on the stereo. Shapiro almost never made it to China. Picked by the United States Army for a crash program to train Chinese translators for a possible mainland landing, he continued his language courses after the project was scuttled. After World War II ended, he decided to whet his curiosity. "I went to China in 1947 to have a look around," he says, chuckling as he adds: "And I'm still looking. "There is so much change, that's what's always been amazing about China," he notes, shaking his head. "And it's still changing. A Jewish lawyer from New York, Shapiro arrived in Shanghai at a chaotic moment. The city still hadn't recovered from wartime bombing and the Japanese occupation. Once a flourishing international port, Shanghai was torn by battles between the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) and the Communist Party. "It was a horrible time. There were bodies in the streets, everywhere," he recalls. Still, it was also an exhilarating time for a new immigrant with no ties to his old land. Offered work with a local law firm, Shapiro decided to stay "and see what happened next." Language exchanges with a Chinese woman blossomed into romance; a year later he married Phoenix, an actress and leader of a Communist support group. Fleeing the KMT, the pair moved north to try to reach the rebel army. Turned back by authorities, they only retreated to Beijing, where they were on hand to welcome the arrival of the People's Liberation Army. Shapiro's description of the PLA entry to Beijing is one of many highlights in the book. Shapiro spent the next half-century as a translator of Chinese literature. Among his prized accomplishments is an English version of the Chinese classic "Shui Hu Zhuan," a sort of Robin Hood tale from the 14th

Century. It had been translated many times, most notably as "All Men Are Brothers," by Pearl Buck. Shapiro's version was called "Outlaws of the Marsh," and was recently reissued as part of a massive bi-lingual collection called "Library of Chinese Classics." His translation comprises five volumes of the collection. A big smile spreads across his face as he pulls one from his bookshelves and thumbs through the lavishly-illustrated edition. "This is my bid for immortality," he says proudly. Shapiro credits the book with saving him during the Cultural Revolution, when his wife was hauled off and his department rocked by horrible infighting. "Factions formed, like everywhere else, with all sides arguing over which was the most Marxist. They fought, not just verbally, but physically. Six guys were killed at the office. It was terrible and it went back and forth, with one side capturing the administration and torturing their enemies. "But they left me alone," he says, emerging from a rare dark mood. "It was because of the book. They both wanted credit for producing it." The Cultural Revolution prompts harsh criticism. "Mistakes were made," says Shapiro. He attributes this, like many other Chinese shortcomings, to the country's inability to break free of its feudal past. The worst transgressions, he blames "on opportunists. Those I call holier than Mao." Shapiro's memoir, not surprisingly, voices steady support for the government. It sometimes reads like overzealous cheerleading, for instance when refuting the notion of discontent in Tibet, especially since Shapiro concedes during our chat that he has never actually visited Tibet. Yet he isn't a vapid-headed propagandist either. While he generally takes China's side, especially against foreign reporters who, too often, have a habit of "taking a big stick to China," he

can also discuss the failings of the government he has spent most of his life serving.

This candor is one of the charms of his autobiography (actually his second; the first appeared in the 1970s. "I'm ashamed to think that I thought I had so much more to say," he quips). The China shelves are already crammed with far too many books pounded out in a year or two visiting reporters, or after a two-week bike tour by some wide-eyed westerner. While "I Chose China" is clearly in the pro-China camp, it also offers refreshing insight into tumultuous events of the past half-century by one man who fell in love with a foreign land.

That gives "I Chose China" wide appeal. In contrast, "Jews in Old China" has more niche appeal to scholars. Ultimately, though, its greatest failing is the inability to answer the major questions of why Jews went to Kaifeng, why they stayed and, most important, why they vanished.

In his defense, the author implies the answers are obvious. Time and distance wore down old religious beliefs and assimilation took its toll. Shapiro's comment that "there has never been any racial discrimination in China" is a bit over-the-top (tell that to any African diplomat posted in China), yet his point about the lack of pogroms against Jews in China is poignant. No evidence suggests Jews were treated worse than Muslims or Christians or any other Foreign Devils.

To be sure, persecution has played a significant role in fortifying Jewish faith, however tragic the consequences. Still, that doesn't explain why Kaifeng's Jews assimilated, since communities survived for centuries in isolation in India and Egypt. One expects better theories, especially from someone who has lived for a half century in China, yet still describes in mouth-watering detail bagels and pastrami left behind in his strong Bronx accent.

TIGER MOMS: A RESPONSE BY ALBERT YEE

Published by *cbartlett*

Statement to the Asian American Psychological Association

Out of nowhere roared Amy Chua and her portrayal of what it means to be Chinese and how the Chinese raise their children. Capped by TIME magazine Jan. 31st cover and write-up, frenzy erupted over her book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, and Wall Street Journal op-ed (Jan. 8), "Why Chinese Mothers Are Superior." Insisting that she is a model Chinese parent, Chua claims her harsh, punitive methods of raising her children to be perfect students and musicians show why Chinese youths excel academically and musically. Pitting childrearing patterns into the polar opposites of Chinese dominance versus American indulgence, she claims that Chinese parents hector their kids as she does and makes American parents her straw man. Her self-perception of always seeking perfection, which she says comes from being a true Chinese, broadcasts identity confusion. A Harvard graduate and Yale law professor, she is the daughter of Chinese immigrants from the Philippines and a Catholic in a family that adheres to Jewish traditions. Ignorant of China and Asia, she says she often feels like an outsider in America and finds little to enjoy in life. Reading like cries for help, her writings reveal possible signs of obsessive compulsive personality disorder. AAPA members, particularly those in developmental and clinical psychology, should address Chua's autocratic parenting style and misleading characterizations of the

Chinese.

In one example of how Chua's parenting works, she related a tussle with her seven-year-old daughter, Lulu, who was practicing a difficult piano piece. Chua wrote that she worked "nonstop" with Lulu "drilling each of her hands separately" and then trying to put the two parts of the piece together. After a week of this, Lulu had had enough. The little girl "announced in exasperation that she was giving up and stomped off." Chua persisted as follows:

"Get back to the piano now," I ordered.

"You can't make me."

"Oh yes, I can."

Back at the piano, Lulu made me pay. She punched, thrashed and kicked. She grabbed the music score and tore it to shreds. I taped the score back together and encased it in a plastic shield so that it could never be destroyed again. Then I hauled Lulu's dollhouse to the car and told her I'd donate it to the Salvation Army piece by piece if she didn't have "The Little White Donkey" perfect by the next day. When Lulu said, "I thought you were going to the Salvation Army, why are you still here?" I threatened her with no lunch, no dinner, no Christmas or Hanukkah presents, no birthday parties for two, three, four years. When she still kept playing it wrong, I told her she was purposely working herself into frenzy, because she was secretly afraid she couldn't do it. I told her to stop being lazy, cowardly, self-indulgent and pathetic.

At that point Chua's husband (Jed Rubenfeld, a respected Yale law professor) stepped in. He told me to stop insulting Lulu - which I wasn't even doing, I was just motivating her - and that he didn't think threatening Lulu was helpful. Also, he said, maybe Lulu really just couldn't do the technique - perhaps she didn't have the coordination yet - had I considered that possibility? "You just don't believe in her," I accused. "That's ridiculous," Jed said scornfully. "Of course I do." "Sophia (the older daughter) could play the piece when she was this age." "But Lulu and Sophia are different people," Jed pointed out. "Oh no, not this," I said, rolling my eyes. "Everyone is special in their special own way," I mimicked sarcastically. "Even losers are special in their own special way." (Chua, 2011, pp. 60-61)

Eventually - after so much yelling that Chua lost her voice - Lulu learned to play the piece as her mother demanded, and Chua wrote that the girl felt triumphant about it. "Western parents worry a lot about their children's self-esteem," she concludes. "But as a parent, one of the worst things you can do for your child's self-esteem is to let them give up. On the flip side, there's nothing better for building confidence than learning you can do something you thought you couldn't." Unfortunately, Chua does not realize that tormenting a child like that to perform on the spot, even if successful, can breed lasting resentment and augurs poorly

for future prospects.

Ethnically Chinese myself, 4th-generation American versus Chua who is 2nd-generation, I am highly troubled by her dogmatism, even when she tries to backtrack from hard to soft. Well acquainted with the U.S. and East Asia, I have been a Korean War GI, an elementary-school teacher in California, and a psychology and education professor at universities in America, China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Singapore. Chinese and other Asians where I have taught do study diligently. That is because their societies have pyramid educational systems that determine children's futures through serial, gate-keeping examinations beginning as low as 4th grade. Most Asian parents do the best they can for their children; none from the many families I know well are as hysterical and hard-hearted as Chua, such as thrusting her daughter out into the freezing outdoors and threatening to burn the children's toys, and calling them "garbage" for dissatisfying her. Every year I taught in Hong Kong, the very few who aced the final secondary-school exam with perfect marks told the press that their parents gave them positive support and did not have to pressure them to excel. What fuels study zeal and grades for ambitious youths in Asia and America is gaining admission into an elite university, such as Beijing, Tokyo, Harvard, Stanford and MIT. While American youths can attend school and graduate from high

school with minimal proficiency and enter higher education, in Asia's pyramid educational systems many government gate-keeping examinations sort youths up, down or out. Asian private elementary and secondary schools, which are costly and usually the best, enroll students through tough entrance exams. Therefore, socio-cultural realities impact the lives of children in America and Asia, which do not proffer authoritarian-dictatorial parenting and teaching. American youths have educational opportunities that Asians can only envy. For a concrete example, in America 70% of college-aged youths are enrolled in higher education versus fewer than 20% in Asian nations. Besides the constricted enrollment, Asian students aim their sights to their societies' best universities as ranked in order of difficulty to be enrolled and their graduates' job prospects. Understanding what their youths face, Asian parents are predominately encouraging and helpful. Only the foolish apply the Tiger Mother approach. A Hong Kong lady told me that her father beat her hard whenever she brought home a grade less than "A," which made her so fearful of tests that her schoolwork suffered.

My latest book, "Raising and Teaching Children for Their Tomorrows," (Tate Publishing) contradicts Chua's philosophy and tactics. Demanding absolute obedience through fiat, punishment, and the restriction

of activities, Chua's authoritarian-dictatorial management style makes youths highly dependent on their masters and often leads to rejection (as her youngest did), paranoia, depression, and suicide. Rather, I strongly recommend the authoritative-engaging style, which is based on a constructive, future-oriented perspective and positive caregiver-child attachment and interactive dialogue. My book also examines the indulgent-permissive and neglectful-indifferent management styles, which create their own problems. It also considers possible management shifts, such as turning from dictatorial to indulgent as Chua seems to claim how she handled Lulu at the end of her book. Key concepts, such as attachment and social interaction, are discussed with many examples and in a chapter that analyzes and compares the childhoods, education and lives notable individuals, such as Sandra O'Conner, JFK, Mae West, and Adolf Hitler. The final chapter compares America's lowly-rated educational system with those of nations that many studies commend as having the world's best teachers and student achievements, such as Finland, Singapore and South Korea.

Albert Yee is a retired professor of psychology and a member of the Board of Directors of the Sino-Judaic Institute. For more information, go to <http://albertyee.tateauthor.com>

Points East - March 2011

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The Ghosts of Shanghai

By Ron Gluckman/Shanghai

A vibrant Jewish community appeared on the banks of the Huangpu River in old Shanghai, for a brief flash in history. Now scholars and former refugees of this amazing enclave are trying to make sense of it all

YU WEIDONG BRINGS HIS bicycle to a stop alongside a corner dress shop. On the wall behind three mannequins is a tiny brass plaque. Puffing with excitement, Yu recites the inscription, a memorial to his favorite Shanghai ghosts. Three weeks later, on the other side of the world, Judith Moranz rests her head upon her husband Karl's shoulder. Time peels away in Las Vegas's MGM Grand Hotel ballroom as they sway to big band tunes, soundtracks of their youth. Her eyes grow misty. The songs are sentimental favorites from wartime America, but they take Moranz back to that same street corner in Shanghai.

Moranz was 8 when she left Shanghai in 1949, decades before Yu was born. They have never met, but are linked in an odd way. Yu has spent his life studying people like the Moranzes and the couples dancing around them. In Vegas, they look like average tourists. Yu, though, sees them as holy spirits of a rich and mysterious age. A half century ago, they inhabited an intriguing corner of China: Shanghai's boisterous Jewish ghetto. Viennese gentlemen sipped coffee outside Austrian bakeries so authentic that the neighborhood was called Little Vienna. Nearby were kosher butcher shops and German delicatessens. Diners read Shanghai papers printed in German, Polish, even Yiddish. Candles for Jewish holidays were sold nearby at Abraham's Dry Goods, and the tango was danced nightly at Max Sperber's Silk Hat.

A unique Jewish community once thrived in Shanghai, where Jews had worked since the opening of China's largest treaty port in 1842. A century later, European Jews fleeing Adolf Hitler poured into Shanghai where, even among the large international settlements, they stood out, a distinct community with its own hospitals, theaters, schools and sports leagues. Life wasn't always jolly, of course. Jewish refugees were later herded into Hongkou ghetto in the city's northeast, where food was scarce and disease rampant. But in Shanghai, unlike much of the world, nearly all the Jews survived the war.

Shanghai's role as savior of these souls is the stuff of classic cinema -- indeed, many books and films are being produced to tell a tale that makes Schindler's List pale in comparison. Before and during World War II, some of Shanghai's richest men conspired to save tens of thousands of Jews. Exactly how many is not known, but some historians say Shanghai saved more Jews from the Nazi Holocaust than all Commonwealth countries combined. Among them were hundreds of religious scholars. A wartime chaplain in Shanghai wrote that 500 scholars in Shanghai maintained the nearly 6,000-year tradition of Jewish teaching, making it at that time one of the world's great Jewish cities.

Ironically, this remarkable religious community vanished even more rapidly than it took root. When civil war enveloped China, the

refugees fled again. By the end of the 1950s, Shanghai's synagogues were shuttered and its Jews gone.

And that should have been the end to this little-known tale. But, in another twist to the saga, about a decade ago Jewish culture returned to China, where religion has been suppressed for half a century. Stories from the Talmud are being retold and Hebrew scriptures studied again. Most remarkable of all, Shanghai's new Jewish scholars are all Chinese. Yu is one of them. He is a graduate of China's first Jewish-studies program, which was pioneering in every way. Students used old Hebrew newspapers and concocted lessons themselves when no Jewish teachers could be found. Five other students joined the pilot program of Jewish and Hebrew studies launched by Peking University in the mid-1980s. The other students later went abroad, to Israel or the U.S., leaving Yu with an odd distinction: he's probably the sole Hebrew-speaking college graduate in a country of 1.2 billion people.

For years that distinction was meaningless. Yu found some work as a tour guide for a trickle of curious American Jews seeking what signs remained of the Jewish community in Shanghai. Yu also practiced Hebrew with visitors from Israel. But, up until a few years ago, they were even rarer. China and Israel, two ancient nations reborn after World War II, lacked ties until 1992.

Since then, there has been a steady

increase in exchanges between sinologists studying Shanghai's Jewish community, and the local academics who are trying to make sense of the odd little Jewish settlement that flourished in their midst. "We have to rescue this history," insists Xu Buzeng, 70-year-old doyen of Jewish scholars in Shanghai, who realized a lifelong dream last fall when he visited Israel on a fellowship to Hebrew University. "We must research and write about this rich period of our history," he says. "Otherwise, in 10 to 20 years, when we are gone, this history will be lost forever."

Also desperate to salvage Shanghai's Jewish heritage are thousands of survivors of the wartime refuge. They have been meeting with greater urgency in the last few years. In Las Vegas last September, nearly 400 attended one gathering, the fourth and largest ever Old China Hands Reunion. Tables were piled with books, mostly self-published memoirs. Betty Grebenshikoff said she wrote *Once My Name Was Sara* for her children and grandchildren, "So they would know what happened. The Shanghai experience was amazing, and few in the world know about it." Added Evelyn Pike, author of *Ghetto Shanghai*: "I tell people to write. These stories ought to be told."

Jewish history in China dates to at least the 8th century, when West Asian traders roamed the Silk Road. A Jewish settlement was established in the city of Kaifeng, in what is now Henan province, where a synagogue was built in 1163 and thousands of Jews worshiped openly. Kaifeng today boasts some Hebrew writing on tombstones, but no living link to its Jewish past (although some residents claim Jewish blood). By the 20th century, the community in Kaifeng was eclipsed by cities like Harbin, Ningbo and Tianjin, which all had sizable Jewish settlements. None rivaled Shanghai. Herman Dicker's *Wanderers and Settlers* in the

Far East details three distinct periods of Jewish immigration to Shanghai. The first began in the 1800s, with the arrival of Jewish businessmen from West Asia, mainly Baghdad. Among them were the Sassoons and Kadoories, the latter one of Hong Kong's wealthiest families. They financed some of Shanghai's finest colonial architecture, including the magnificent Children's Palace (formerly the Kadoorie estate, Marble Hall), the art deco Peace Hotel (then the Cathay Hotel) and Shanghai Mansions, a Sassoon building that was used to process, and illegally house at times, hundreds of refugees. In 1932, the Shanghai Stock Exchange listed almost 100 members; nearly 40% were Sephardic Jews. They joined the city's finest clubs; a privilege denied Jews even in liberal parts of Europe and America. As a measure of their security in Shanghai, flamboyant Victor Sassoon reportedly boasted, "There is only one race greater than the Jews, and that is the Derby."

This small Jewish circle was affected in the early 1900s by a second wave of immigration that brought Russian Jews fleeing the pogroms (campaigns of repression) and, later, the Russian Revolution. Most settled in northern China. By 1910, Harbin had 1,500 Jews, but the number grew to 13,000 by 1929. Many moved south to Shanghai after the Japanese took Manchuria in the early 1930s.

The Russians did not mix much with Shanghai's Jewish elite. Russian Jews ran their own stores and restaurants, read Russian newspapers and enjoyed their own music and theater. Many settled in the French quarter, where they founded the Jewish Music Club. There were conflicts, especially over religious issues, but the Jews were no different than Shanghai's tens of thousands of other foreigners, whether British, American, French, German or Japanese. All kept to classes defined by ethnic and economic lines. Otherwise, rules were few in Shanghai, and

opportunities endless.

"We lived our lives with great panache," says Shanghai-born Mario Machado (pictured left in front of a bulletin board where old friends post messages to and mementos of long-lost Shanghai pals) a longtime Hollywood broadcaster who organized last year's Old China Hands conference. "Shanghai was magical. We were a proud group of people, a diverse group, bound by a special camaraderie."

The community was self-contained. There were seven synagogues, four cemeteries and a club where performances were given by some of Europe's finest musicians. Children attended a Jewish school financed by Horace Kadoorie.

They joined Jewish scout troops, competed in Jewish football leagues and chess tournaments. Those with pocket money could ride one of 2,000 rickshaws -- Asia's largest fleet -- owned by A. Cohen. The building that housed his Star Garage still stands on Nanjing Road. And they cheered as Jewish boxers like Sam Lefko, Kid Ruckenstein and Laco Kohn pounded their opponents.

Why Shanghai? As the rest of the world closed to desperate Jews seeking escape from the Nazis, Shanghai remained one of the rare free transit ports. Explains *The Muses Flee Hitler*, a book by Washington's Smithsonian Institute released to honor the centennial of the birth of Albert Einstein (who visited Shanghai twice in the 1920s): "Shanghai required neither visas nor police certificates. It did not ask for affidavits of health, or proof of financial independence. There were no quotas."

Thus began the third phase of Jewish migration; an estimated 20,000 poured into Shanghai from 1937 to 1939. Some merely passed through, en route to the Americas, Palestine or Australia, but about 90% stayed. Restrictions were put on immigration in August 1939, but still they came in droves as war consumed Europe

and other avenues of escape closed. Thousands arrived in rags, with neither entry permits nor any means of support. Housing for latecomers was extremely sparse -- hundreds languished in temporary shelters. The four-person family of Ralph Hirsch, who escaped from Berlin to Shanghai as a boy in 1940, had a tiny apartment for six months, then lived in one small room for six years. Other refugees recall sharing one room with several families.

It was a constant struggle, but the community took care of itself until Pearl Harbor in 1941. Foreigners from Allied nations were sent to prison camps. German and Austrian Jews, the largest group, were considered stateless refugees, and were confined to Hongkou ghetto in 1943. "There was no barbed wire and it wasn't heavily patrolled, but adults needed passes to go out," says Hirsch, American director of a group called the Council on the Jewish Experience in Shanghai. Yet, with all its deprivations, Hongkou was like summer camp compared with ghettos in Europe, where Jews were penned in by the Nazis, who eventually sent most to their deaths. In Shanghai, the Jewish community quickly rebuilt itself after the war, but the city would never be the same. The Japanese were defeated, yet fighting continued in the civil war between the Nationalists and Communists. An exodus of foreigners began immediately. Options were puzzling. Zoya Shlakis fled Lithuania to escape the Nazis, only to find his nation occupied by the Soviets after the war. "I was considered a Russian immigrant," he says, "but I wanted nothing to do with the Communists." Shlakis went to Taiwan and later emigrated to the U.S., "where I was termed a Chinese immigrant!"

Some Shanghai-born Jews were sent to third countries. Israel evacuated several ships of Jews from Shanghai as Mao Zedong's Red Army crept closer in 1948. Several towns

in Israel were settled entirely by Shanghai survivors. The U.S. was the most desired destination; San Francisco has a synagogue founded by, and whose congregation is still largely made up of, former Shanghai residents.

Karl and Judy Moranz left in 1949 for Italy on the same boat. "We were from Vienna. We lived three blocks apart," Karl says. Yet they didn't meet until a decade later in New York, at a 10th-anniversary ball for Shanghai survivors. She was 17, he nearly 30. "I bought her a drink and she gave me her number." A year later, they were married. Not all stories ended happily. By 1953, 440 Jews remained in Shanghai, and the number fell to 84 by 1958. Most were sick or elderly, and in the care of the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai, which ran a shelter until 1959.

Afterward, virtually all trace of Jewish life in Shanghai was wiped away. Schools and shops closed, and most synagogues were demolished by China's new rulers. Shanghai remained unobservant of its Jewish legacy for three decades. Then, one by one, the spirits began stirring. I felt their presence during my first visit to the city in 1990. And little wonder, since I was staying at the old Jewish Music Club, now the Shanghai Music Conservatory. A foreign student mentioned some old professors who had formed a Jewish study association. After numerous calls, I finally tracked them down.

In a dingy basement, I found a dozen mostly retired teachers arguing odd points from the Bible. Odd, because it was apparent few, if any, had ever read a Bible. They had half a dozen associations, with ambitious names like the Center of Israel and Jewish Studies of the Chinese Institute for Peace and Development Studies. But all involved the same men, exchanging the same second-hand scholarly gossip. Genuine information was rare, and for good reason: Such study was not

sanctioned by the government.

"We've produced more than two dozen papers to date," one retired professor told me. When I asked for copies, he sheepishly admitted: "None of them has been published. We don't have permission." Some were thrilled to actually be meeting a Jew, and one with a Chinese connection - my father and his parents also escaped from Germany through China, but not by way of Shanghai. Still, many were genuine scholars, with a keen interest in sharing information. I found this out after a meeting with one of the men. We sipped tea for hours, discussing practically anything but our common interest. Then at the door, the professor paused to casually mention a report from the city archives, barred to foreigners. Holding excitement in check, I said farewell. Just before the door closed, though, he pulled some papers from under his shirt and handed me the report. It sounds funny now, but China was a nervous place at the time.

Since then, I have kept in touch with these scholars, watching with fascination as their field slowly gained credibility. As it did, so too did their lives improve. By my next visit, they had moved from their basement office to a large estate. On the doorway was a smart brass nameplate. And, best of all, the professors proudly showed me their first book, a collection of essays on Jewish subjects, written in Chinese.

By then, the various associations had blended into the Center of Jewish Studies, headed by Pan Guang. A young history professor from the Shanghai Academy of Social Service, Pan is the official spokesman on this subject, and it is a sign of the times that he travels much of the year, a feted guest at Jewish conferences eager to have a Chinese speaker on board. Pan recently published *The Jews of Shanghai*, the first book about the community in English and Chinese.

Nor have the other academics been passed over. Xu Buzeng, who translated into Chinese David Kranzler's definitive 1976 work, Japanese, Nazis and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945, has also lived to see published several of his papers on prominent refugee musicians and composers. Xu Xin, perhaps China's leading Judaic scholar, heads a Jewish-studies program in Nanjing. He recently coordinated the release of an abridged Chinese version of the Encyclopedia Judaica, a 900-page volume that took three years and the work of 40 scholars to complete. And Yu tutors Shanghai residents in Hebrew. "People are interested in Jews," he says. "Everyone has heard about them and how they are good with money."

China and Israel have only had diplomatic relations for five years. Politics kept them in separate spheres, even though Israel was among the first nations to recognize Communist China. "There's a lot of curiosity," says former Consul General Moshe Ram, who has been regularly reminded of the wartime Jewish community since opening the Israel mission in Shanghai in 1994. "But let's put things in perspective. It's a good story. In fact, it's a great story. But it's small, and the impact is minimal." He tries to focus on the present, particularly on increasing trade between Israel and China.

"The Jews and China were always good friends," notes Pan Guang. Indeed, China was an early supporter of the concept of a Jewish state, according to Rena Krasno, a Shanghaiander and author. In a paper published by the 12-year-old Sino-Judaic Institute in California, Krasno reprints a letter of support from a founder of modern China; Sun Yat-sen. China was among members of the League of Nations that in 1922 voted in favor of the Palestine Mandate, proposing a Jewish homeland. All this history wells up in Shanghai,

where a determined researcher can still find Stars of David decorating old tenements in the French quarter. And interest is being rekindled by a growing number of Jewish businessmen, who hold regular religious services in the city.

"There's a real cultural connection between the Chinese and the Jews," Pan says. "Many people write about this. The Chinese have been called the Jews of Asia, you know. Both emphasize family and education. And both build cultures, the oldest in the world. Both peoples also live in many places, but the people never change."

Last year, Shanghai opened its first Jewish museum, inside the old Ohel Moishe temple. There is no real collection, only a few framed photos of refugees and some of the prominent Jews who have visited. But outside, the narrow streets of Hongkou are as alive as ever.

In 1994, Hirsch returned to the city with a few former refugees. It was an odd step forward in Chinese-Jewish relations. The officially sponsored visit failed to take in many of the old Jewish sites, but did include a tour of Pudong and a pitch for investment.

Still, most were smiling: Shanghai's ghosts had come home. "Hardly anything has changed," Hirsch said, "least of all the people. It's cleaner now, but Shanghai looks the same, it sounds the same, and it smells the same."

FAMOUS SONS

Among the Jewish community of Shanghai were many who made a mark on China, the region or the world. Among the famous sons and daughters of Shanghai were:

The Kadoories - This family made its fortune in Shanghai and Hong Kong real estate and utilities; their Hong Kong and Shanghai Hotel chain (including the Peninsula) is among the finest in the world.

The Sassoons - One-time opium traders who went big-time into trading and property.

Morris Cohen - Known by his nickname Two-Gun Cohen, he served as bodyguard and aide-de-camp to Sun Yat-sen, eventually becoming a Chinese general.

Dr. Jakob Rosenfeld - An Austrian who spent nine years overseeing health care for the Communist army.

Michael Medavoy - Lived in Shanghai until age 7, he went onto a career as Hollywood mogul at Columbia, Orion and TriStar Pictures.

Peter Max - Influential American pop artist was born in Germany, but spent 10 years in Shanghai.

Mike Blumenthal - Became U.S. Treasury Secretary.

Eric Halpern - With other Shanghai Jews, he founded the Far Eastern Economic Review, and was its first editor.

Ron Gluckman is a reporter from San Francisco, the "Shanghai of the West," who first came to China while retracing the route of escape from Hitler taken by his own Jewish father and grandparents. They left Nazi Germany in Sept 1940 and traveled by train through Eastern Europe, across Russia and via China to Korea, Japan, then boat across the Pacific. He spent six years, on and off, researching this story, which ran in Asiaweek in June 1997.

For a related story, please click upon Old China Hands. Recently, documentary makers have been flocking to Shanghai to capture on film the story of this Port of last Resort.

To review some of Ron Gluckman's other reports from China, please click on China page.

Or read the amazing story of the oldest Jew in China.

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From Kaifeng to the Kotel: a Chinese Rabbi in the Making

by Michael Freund



Yaakov Wang (center) at morning prayers

It is a warm summer day in Israel and despite the agreeable weather outside, Yaakov Wang is glued to his seat in the study hall.

Arrayed on the desk in front of him is a small mountain of Jewish texts, ranging from the Bible to the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (Concise Code of Jewish Law) to books on Jewish philosophy and thought.

Yaakov listens intently as his teacher at a Jerusalem-area yeshiva explains the intricacies of Jewish practice and belief. Puzzled by a particular explanation, he doesn't hesitate to ask for clarification when the need arises.

Satisfied with the answer he receives, he dutifully enters the information into a spiral notebook for further study and reflection.

It is a typical scene, one that is repeated throughout schools of Jewish learning across the land.

But Yaakov is not your typical yeshiva student.

He is a descendant of the Jewish community of Kaifeng, China, and he is avidly pursuing an extraordinary dream: to become the first Chinese rabbi in 200 years.

Jews are believed to have settled in Kaifeng, which was one of China's imperial capitals, in the 8th century during the Song Dynasty or perhaps even earlier. Scholars believe they may have been Sephardic merchants from Persia or Iraq who made their way eastward along the Silk Route. With the blessing of the Chinese emperor, the Jews established themselves in the city, where they found an environment of tolerance and acceptance, in sharp contrast to much of the rest of the Diaspora.

In 1163, Kaifeng's Jews built a large and beautiful synagogue, which was subsequently renovated and rebuilt on numerous occasions throughout the centuries. At its peak, during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the Kaifeng Jewish community may have numbered as many as 5,000 people. By the 17th century, a number of Chinese Jews had attained high ranks in the Chinese civil service, but along with success came the blight of assimilation, which took an increasingly heavy toll on the community and its cohesion.

By the mid-1800s, the Chinese Jews' knowledge and practice of Judaism had largely faded away. The last rabbi of the community is believed to have died in the early part of the 19th century, and the synagogue building was all but destroyed by a series of floods which struck the city in the 1840s and thereafter.

Nevertheless, against all odds, Kaifeng's Jews struggled to preserve their Jewish identity, passing down whatever little they knew to their progeny.

In the 1920s, a Chinese scholar named Chen Yuan wrote a series of treatises on religion in China, including "A study of the Israelite religion in Kaifeng." Yuan noted the decline the community had endured, but took pains to recall that the remaining descendants still tried as best they could to observe various customs and rituals, including that of Yom Kippur. "Although the Kaifeng Jews today no longer have a temple where they can observe this holy day," Yuan wrote, "they still fast and mourn without fail on the 10th day of the month."

Nowadays, in this city of over 4.5 million, there are still several hundred people - perhaps a thousand at most - who are descendants of the Jewish community. Because of intermarriage in preceding generations, most if not all are no longer considered Jewish in the eyes of Jewish law.

In recent years, an awakening of sorts has taken place, especially among the younger generation of Kaifeng Jewish descendants, many of whom wish to learn more about their heritage and reclaim their roots.

It was this stirring which propelled Yaakov and six other Jewish descendants from Kaifeng to make aliyah in October 2009. They were brought to Israel by the Shavei Israel organization which I founded and chair.

Yaakov Wang (on left) working on kibbutz

Upon arrival at Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion airport, Yaakov could barely contain his emotion. "I am very excited to be here in the Holy Land," he said,

adding, "This is something that my ancestors dreamed about for generations, and now, thank G-d, I have finally made it."

From the airport, the group went straight to the Western Wall, where they recited the "Shehehyanu" blessing with great feeling, and then burst into a chorus of traditional Jewish songs.

For the first six months after his arrival, Yaakov studied Hebrew at a religious kibbutz in Israel's Beit Shean valley, before going to yeshiva to deepen his Jewish knowledge and prepare to undergo a formal process of conversion.

He dove into his studies with alacrity, thirsty to acquaint himself with the ways of his ancestors.

As a youth growing up in Kaifeng, Yaakov had a strong if somewhat vague sense of his Jewish heritage. Whenever he joined friends for dinner, he recalls, he was the only one who did not order pork, which is no small matter in a country where that particular non-kosher dish is a cultural and culinary norm. But for Yaakov, it was one of the only ways he knew to express his attachment to being Jewish.

Yaakov is especially passionate about mastering Hebrew, in part thanks to the influence of his grandfather. "He knew Jews had their own language," he explains, "but he didn't know the language itself."

Despite their isolation, the Jews in Kaifeng were reminded of their



heritage daily: until recently, their internal documents listed their ethnic identity as "Jewish."

In middle school, when Yaakov's fellow students found out he was Jewish, they would comment, "now I know why you are cleverer than me," he recalls with a wry smile.

His connection with his roots is even more pronounced: his Chinese surname is "Yage" which derives from the Biblical patriarch "Yaakov." Since his arrival in Israel, Yaakov has immersed himself in his studies. He particularly enjoys the Bible.

"I like learning about the Parsha (the weekly Torah portion) so that I can better understand what is being read in synagogue on Shabbat," he says.

In addition to study, Yaakov and the other Kaifeng descendants have also found time to tour the country, taking trips to old Jaffa, going hiking in the

Gilboa mountains, visiting Theodor Herzl's tomb and praying several times at the Kotel (the Western Wall) in Jerusalem. "When we were close to the Kotel, I felt in my heart that we shouldn't speak loud," he says. "We need the quiet to think about our life and our connection with G-d."

Once he completes his conversion, Yaakov plans to study towards rabbinical ordination. And while he is aware that this would make him the first native Chinese rabbi in two centuries, his focus is less on making history and more on helping others.

"I want to help other Kaifeng Jews to learn more about our heritage," he says modestly. "They deserve a chance to become more knowledgeable Jews. That is what our ancestors would have wanted."

Every day, three times a day, Yaakov attends services in synagogue, saying that he prays that the remaining Jewish descendants still in Kaifeng will be able to return to the Jewish people and make aliyah "as soon as possible."

And if that day should indeed come to pass, Yaakov Wang, perhaps bearing the title "rabbi", will be there to welcome them home.

Michael Freund is the Chairman of Shavei Israel, a Jerusalem-based organization that assists "lost Jews" seeking to return to the Jewish people.

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CHINESE INVESTOR GIVES START-UP \$30M

An Israeli start-up company has received a \$30m million investment from China's richest man.

Billionaire Li Ka Shing has invested in the navigation-technology firm WAZE, which will put the money into supporting its application's more than 7 million drivers and launch a

traffic-reporting platform in China, Globes reported.

The WAZE free mobile application helps drivers find the shortest route to their destination and provides data on traffic conditions provided by its users. The company also has a social network allowing drivers

to report directly to each other on road conditions. Its users live in 45 countries.

Other shareholders include Microsoft and Qualcomm.

The Jerusalem Post - 25 Oct 2011

Asia's Popular Jewish Corner

by Gil Shefler

A magazine hopes to satisfy the continent's thirst for knowledge about Judaism



With print journalism all but dead, and electronic journalism still experiencing considerable growing pains, starting a new media outlet may raise an eyebrow - but that's exactly what Erica Lyons did in 2010. The American-born, long-time resident of Hong Kong published *Asian Jewish Life*, a quarterly magazine with a 6000 circulation distributed at Israeli embassies, on El Al flights and at Jewish institutions around the continent.

Speaking on the sidelines of the ROI Young Leadership Summit in Jerusalem last week, she said the publication draws thousands more readers through its website each month.

"My mission statement is fairly broad, and maybe a bit ambitious, but one of the things I'm trying to do is connect the Jewish communities in Asia - these small pockets of Jewish life," she said. "Your Jewish neighbors may be a country over, maybe two countries over, but we have community members who travel a lot and have shared histories."

The territory her publication covers is tremendous, with nominal resources. To provide content for her magazine, she relies on a network of contributors.

"It's kind of an emerging network of Asia-focused Israelis and Jews worldwide, and like any other network, once you start speaking to

one person, several names come out of that," she said. "My writers are based in the US, and pretty much every country in Asia and Israel."

Looking at the current state of Asian Jewry, Lyons said dual forces are at work. While some Jewish communities in the region have been shrinking for decades, others are growing rapidly - especially over the past decade.

"In India, people say it's a dying community, but I don't like the phrase 'a dying community'... Most of them are making aliya, others are going to the States. It is a real crisis for that community, and the best defense we really can have is another angle I'm taking with this magazine [which is the] preservation of that history and culture. The other communities in Asia are very different. They're expats. The Chinese community in Shanghai is very international: Israelis, Americans, British, French - and they are going to grow."

Perhaps surprisingly, Lyons said some of the most avid readers of *Asian Jewish Life* are not Jewish. "In China, there's never been a history of anti-Semitism, and there's a real thirst for knowledge and information about Jewish history," she said. "The magazine provides a good platform for that." Lyons said she hopes in the future to translate the magazine to Chinese, and to create a website in that language mirroring the existing one in English.

Another participant at the ROI summit whose interests lie in Asia is Rebecca Zeffert.

As the founder and executive director of The Israel-Asia Center, an Israeli non-profit created in 2009, she works diligently to advance

cooperation and understanding between the Jewish State and India, Southeast Asia and China.

"We have a website and newsletter providing news features and analysis on Israel-Asia affairs covering economic, foreign policy and cultural issues," said the British-born Zeffert. "We have all kinds of events in Israel, Asia and the US, [including] briefing seminars and panel discussions."

Zeffert became captivated with Asia as a college student, where she studied Japanese and Mandarin. The idea for a center cultivating ties between Israel and Asia came from several similar institutes abroad, said Zeffert, who added that the center depends on donations from the US and Hong Kong - as well as the work of its 30 volunteer members.

This summer the organization will launch its latest initiative, The Israel-Asia Leadership Fellowship, a program that will introduce Asian students to Israeli leaders in business, diplomacy, science and technology. It will create internships for them at local firms.

Zeffert encouraged Asian students currently in Israel, or those who will be studying here in the 2011-2012 academic year, to apply before the deadline in July 2011.

Because the Jewish population in Asia is small, Zeffert and Lyons know about each other, and met before participating at the ROI summit. However, Zeffert balked at the proposition that the two combine their efforts.

"It has been discussed in the past, and there's certainly a lot of overlap, but there are also reasons why they should stay separate," she said.

THE JERUSALEM POST - JUNE 29, 2011

The New Israel's Messenger



Vol. XIII, No. 1

IYS Sephardi Division

Editor: Rebecca Toueg & Flori Cohen

We deeply mourn the death of our Chairman, Jack Guri, and extend our condolences to all his family and friends. For the past twelve years he has acted with great devotion and dignity in representing the Sephardi members of our former community in Shanghai now living in Israel and abroad. He was much loved by all for his sincere goodwill and cheerful good humor, conscientiously attending IYS official meetings and social events and distributing the annual scholarship awards to the student descendants of our community members. Mr. Matook Nissim of San Francisco has donated \$1000 towards setting up a scholarship fund in the name of Jack Guri which will be presented at the annual IYS Hannuka event at the end of December by a member of his family



Jack Guri and Matty Nissim visiting the Mount Carmel Memorial Forest for Ezekiel Abraham

This issue begins the thirteenth year of publication for The New Israel's Messenger. During the past twelve years we have published many articles on some members of our former community and have reported on various projects undertaken by the Sephardi Division to maintain contact with each other and to commemorate our past history in Shanghai. Over the years we have lost many of those who supported our efforts, including leading figures such as Sasson Jacoby and Joe Jacob who had given so much of their time and energies to promote our activities. It has thus become increasingly difficult to organize social events and other activities for our members. Our efforts are now concentrated on the following:

To continue publication of the New Israel's Messenger section in the IYS Bulletin.

To computerize all the volumes of the old Israel's Messenger (1904-1938).

To assist the Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center in setting up the long planned exhibition of the Far East communities of Baghdadian Jewry.

The President of the IYS has nominated Mrs. Flori Cohen as the acting chairman of the Sephardi Division in order to carry on the work begun by the former chairman and other committee members.

Flori Cohen's sentimental journey back home

My sisters and I were born and raised in Shanghai, China and it has been our dream to visit the home of our birth. This dream was finally realized through the planning and untiring efforts of two of my grandchildren Guy and Shani (children of my daughter Sharon Elizabeth) - who decided that there would be no more procrastination and that we would make the trip in the year - 2010.

This was planned together with family members in Israel, the US and Canada and finally on 24 July fourteen of us were on our way to Shanghai.

We were all so excited and although we saw the changes in Shanghai on the Internet we could not visualize the huge makeover of the city. When we landed in Shanghai on 25 July, we could not believe the extent of the changes, the many high rises, new hotels, highways, and the new financial district in Pudong, which was once nothing but flat land with some factories. The change is truly amazing.

The highlight of our trip was the visit to the Ohel Rachel synagogue. I wanted to show my children and grandchildren the beautiful synagogue we used to go to every Shabbat and on all the Jewish holidays. The visit was extremely emotional for me and my sister Esther.

I was going through video clips in my mind of my wedding re-living

every moment of that day — it was a beautiful day and a beautiful wedding — the photos I brought with me was picture proof of that occasion. We also reminisced about the High Holidays in the Ohel Rachel and we were remembering all the beautiful Sephardic prayers and tunes. I kept hearing my husband's voice - he had a beautiful voice which could be

furnishings but at the same time we are pleased and happy that once again it was being used as a place of worship for the Jews who today live in Shanghai. Rabbi Greenberg mentioned that they are doing their utmost to return the Ohel Rachel to its original stature.

The day the Ohel Rachel closed its doors for the last time in early March

1952, my mother, sisters Rahma and Esther, my husband's eldest brother Moses Cohen and a few remaining members of the Sephardic community witnessed in great sadness the Torah scrolls being removed from the Ark, and the Ohel Rachel being taken over by the Chinese authorities.

The visit was especially meaningful for my eldest son David who was born in Shanghai at the Ste. Marie Hospital on Rue Pere

Robert (previous street name), the same hospital where my sisters, my cousins and I was born. My children and grandchildren were thrilled with the visit to the Ohel Rachel and most impressed by the stories we shared with them of our life in Shanghai.

We led a very orthodox life and we were very proud of our Jewish traditions. My mother is of the Toeg family one of the oldest Sephardic families in Shanghai. They were closely involved in the Sephardic Jewish Community of Shanghai and in all its activities; furthermore my mother was very active in the



On The Bund - Pudong in the background

heard way above the other members of the congregation.

Since my wedding to Isaiah Meyer Cohen (Shaya) was the last wedding held at the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, on 23 January, 1951 - we requested Rabbi Greenberg, Chabad Shanghai representative, to do his utmost to obtain permission from the Chinese authorities to allow me and my family to visit the synagogue. Rabbi Greenberg succeeded in his endeavors for which we are most grateful.

It was sad to see the Ohel Rachel stripped of all its original interior

committee of the Shanghai Jewish School.

We also had the opportunity to visit our last home where we lived with my Uncle Isaac Hayim Toeg (my mother's brother) and Aunt Grace and their family, on 430 Seymour Road (now Shanxi Lu), which today houses 17 families - all the rooms have been divided into two.

We met some very nice Chinese families now living there who were kind enough to invite us in and let us look around. The Chinese lady Julia - who now lives in my sister's and my room on the upper floor - is an English teacher in one of the universities of Shanghai.

We were very lucky on this trip to have had an excellent guide in Dvir Bar Gal, who knew practically every nook and corner of Shanghai and was able to take us to all the places we wanted to see. The Ohel Rachel, our old schools, early homes, the French Club where we were members, the Lyceum Theatre where the Young Sephardic committee members directed and acted in various plays - the last one being *The Man Who Came to Dinner* in which my husband Isaiah acted. My husband also played the contrabass in the Kalef Band - a band with several members of the Sephardic Jewish community.

All in all this was a very exciting and successful trip which has left us with the desire for another visit - this time on a slower pace so that we can take in even more all the wonderful changes in Shanghai - the city of our birth.

Family history

Both my mother's and father's side are of Baghdadian origin. During the late 1800s when the situation in Baghdad turned sour for the Jews, many members of our family fled to Bombay, India where they stayed for many years. Then my Uncle Isaac Hayim Toeg - my mother's younger brother - was offered a job in Shanghai by a member of the Sassoon family. Once settled there he

sent for the rest of the Toeg family to join him in Shanghai.

Shanghai finally became the home of several families from Baghdad, many of them very wealthy. These families were members of the elite clubs in Shanghai, owned mansions and some had their own stables and race horses - my Uncle Isaac owned a race horse that went by the name Comanche. They went on paper hunts and played in polo matches. All of them also owned luxurious summer homes.

The new generation of Sephardic youth born in Shanghai in the early 1920s and 1930s, in addition to their jazz band mentioned earlier, formed their own amateur dramatic club, producing many plays. In addition the young men formed their own football team called The White Stars Football Team of Shanghai and they played in many matches. Shaya and his youngest brother Abraham were on this team.

We enjoyed a luxurious and pampered upbringing, went to the best schools, and took ballet and music lessons, travelled abroad in style on the famous Empress Lines to Rokosan, Kobe, Japan for the summer vacation. Sometimes we travelled to other vacation spots in China such as Tientsin, Tsingtao, Pei Tai Ho, and Wusih. Very often we joined our cousins on my Uncle Isaac's houseboat Flora on picnic trips to Hangchow.

After the marriage of my mother to Jason Isaac in 1930 and my Uncle Isaac marriage to Grace Toeg, the daughter of his eldest brother Aslan, in the same year, the families moved to homes in Great Western Road. These were large handsome houses with beautiful gardens.

My early years and those of my sister Rahma and my cousins Flora and Rebecca were spent in these beautiful homes with large gardens that had everything we as little children could want in the way of slides, merry-go-rounds, and swings.

When I was around five, my Uncle Isaac decided that he wanted to be closer to the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and hence purchased the large home on the same street where the synagogue is located. He moved there with his family and the family of his older brother Aslan.

At the same time my mother, father and sister Rahma moved to our new home at 10 Edinburgh Road where we lived until I was eight and this was where my sister Esther was born. It was around this time my parents separated, after which it was decided that my mother, my sisters and myself should move in with my Uncle and family on Seymour Road - luckily this was a big house with ten rooms that could accommodate all of us. This was not an easy period for me and my sisters but we adjusted and settled down to a good and happy life in our Uncle Isaac's home. It was actually fun all of us living together. We had our own softball team and acted in plays together.

I can continue on about our life in Shanghai but let us jump to the period of the takeover of Shanghai by the Communists in 1949.

Over the next couple of years the Communist regime made it difficult for foreigners to continue living in Shanghai by taking full possession of our homes, businesses, schools, places of worship - in short the life we knew, cherished and loved was cut short forever. Like many, most of our family had no option but to leave Shanghai, the only home we knew. Some left for Israel, others for England, US, Canada and elsewhere. Flori Cohen now lives in Modi'in, Israel. She recently joined the staff of the Bulletin as an editor of the English Supplement and of the New Israel's Messenger.

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Jewish Times Asia (Issue July 2011)

THE JEWS OF SHANGHAI

Talk by Renée Dangoor in October 1990 at Ta'ali, London

Scattered far and wide throughout the world today are the remnants of what was once a community entitled by every known definition to be called "unique".

It will never reassemble. There will never be another like it. It took a hundred years to come into being, less than five to break it up. Shanghai used to be called "Paris of the Orient". For a city of its size and importance, Shanghai had the most alluring small-town atmosphere, friendly and intimate. It was an example to the world of how people of sixty-three nations, of diverse colour and creed, could live and do business together.

For 70 years Jews in Shanghai were all of Baghdad origin. The Jew had a good reputation among the Chinese. Between 1917 and 1925 5,000 Jews came from Russia and Siberia, and in the 1930's, 20,000 German and Austrian Jews arrived. When all the doors of the world were closed to them, only Shanghai allowed them in, even without a passport.

The Baghdadian Jews, among them the Sassoons, were the most prosperous, as they came to China for business reasons, and not as refugees; but the others soon succeeded.

The three distinct communities, Sephardi, Russian and German each had its own committee, synagogues and rabbis, but they shared hospitals and other amenities.

From the beginning, Shanghai was as open to Jews as to anyone else; and from the beginning, Jews came. One of the first Jewish companies to be established there as early as the

1840's, was David Sassoon and Sons Limited, which set up a Shanghai branch of its already successful Bombay trading and banking company. Elias Sassoon, who came originally from Iraq, was soon joined by other Sephardi (Middle Eastern)



Jews - the Abrahams, Harpoons, Kadoories and others, and most of these families, in time, took British citizenship. In pre-war Shanghai, the Sephardim represented wealth and power out of all proportion to their numbers. Silas Harpoon, for example, had the unique distinction of being appointed to both governing councils - the international and French - at the same time; the company run by Sir Victor Sassoon, a slim, greying, dignified millionaire known as "The

J. P. Morgan of the Orient", owned Shanghai real estate valued at nearly nine million pounds sterling. The president and more than a third of the 99 members of the Shanghai Stock Exchange were Sephardi Jews. Yet, in the 30's there were only 700 Sephardim in Shanghai.

From around the turn of the century, an expanding community of Ashkenazi Jews, mostly from Russia, joined the Sephardim. They came to Shanghai in waves after each of the successive upheavals of the tsar's empire. The final contingent arrived from Manchuria in the early 1930's, driven out by the Japanese. By the time Japan took control of the Chinese area of Shanghai in 1937, the Russian Ashkenazim numbered about 4,000. Some, particularly the earlier arrivals, had been successful. They, or their children, were now part of the comfortable middle-class foreign communities in the settlement or the French Concession. Others were still trying to pull themselves up from the bottom. Almost invariably, the least affluent lived in an area called Hongkew, a riverside district also

heavily populated by Japanese. This was a commercial area, not grand international commerce as on the Bund, but local trading; farmers' markets, hat shops, pickle shops, and Chinese and Japanese department stores. The cost of living in Hongkew was a third less than in other parts of the settlement.

During the mid-1930's, the Ashkenazi community of Shanghai was swelled by increasing numbers of refugees from Germany and

Austria. These early emigrés were far more financially secure than those who fled later. They had the time to organise their departure - either by ship, or through Northern China to Shanghai. Unlike those who followed later, these refugees, some fifteen hundred by the end of 1938, had been allowed to take a certain amount of money with them, and generally they had not been relieved of all their personal possessions at the German border. They were, therefore, better prepared economically and psychologically to survive the devastating change from Central Europe to the heart of the Orient. Both waves of refugees settled in Hongkew at least at first.

Of eleven hundred Polish Jews who arrived in the late summer of 1941 no more than a handful had to spend any time in a Shanghai "heim", where as many as 200 had to live in a room. Not that where they did live, was so much better. Within a few weeks, the Mir Yeshiva was set up for living and learning, in and around the beautiful Beth Aharon Synagogue in Hongkew. But for the rest, aside from a few dozen, like The Amshenover rabbe, who had been welcomed into the pleasant French Concession, housing meant half a floor or less in one of the 12 by 30 foot houses that lined the close dank lanes of Hongkew. But they didn't care. The 1,100 Polish refugees worked themselves into the Shanghai economy as best they could as waiters, second-hand dealers, tailors and so on.

Among the Russian Jews of Shanghai. Yiddish, that magnificently expressive language made up of German, Hebrew, Russian and miscellaneous bits of half a dozen other East European tongues - had been spoken only at home. Suddenly the words came out in public. Yiddish newspapers and magazines appeared. Yiddish theatre was suddenly right there in their midst. Even on radio for a brief period every day, one could hear Yiddish

newscasts and music commentary. With the arrival of the Poles, "to be a Jew in Shanghai" took on new meaning.

Some months before Pearl Harbour, in the late summer of 1941, Heinrich Himmler's plan for the total annihilation of the entire Jewish people had been openly adopted as Nazi policy. In every country where Jews were found, they were to be sifted out of the general population and exterminated. In July 1942, proposals in hand, Meisinger boarded a submarine for Tokyo Bay for the trip to Shanghai. When he arrived at the Japanese Consulate, he made this recommendation.

"There are now in Shanghai, over 17,000 Jews who have chosen to leave the fatherland. In January of this year, the Germany government very wisely deprived these traitors of their citizenship. They are enemies of the German state and potential saboteurs against you, our ally. For the good or our alliance, we strongly feel that the entire Jewish plague must be eradicated from Shanghai. You need not worry about the mechanics, we will handle all the details. You will merely reap the rewards of your labours: you will inherit everything the Jews presently own and control." They planned to round them up from their Synagogues on the Jewish New Year, which was on the evening of September 1st.

The Vice-Consul of Japan Mr Shibata couldn't take his eyes off Meisinger, who described several "experiments" that had been devised at Bergen-Belsen. Shibata was a bright fellow, and he was shocked. He was familiar with the position of the refugees, and how that position had deteriorated. But this? Where was the justification for anything like this?

He went to see one of the men he most admired in Shanghai - Reuben Abraham (my mother's cousin). "Mr Abraham", he finally blurted out, "we have to talk, I can't give you any details, but the Jews in Shanghai

are in the greatest danger. Please, we must have a meeting soon, tonight, tomorrow at the latest." Abraham said, "Tonight and tomorrow are the Sabbath, you know. The Sabbath is a day of holiness, a day of rest."

"Mr Abraham, this is not a social gathering. It is a matter of life and death for all the Jews here." Mr Abraham only shook his head. "It's more than the Jew protecting the Sabbath, Mr Shibata; the Sabbath protects the Jew."

Mr Shibata felt he had to do something. He knocked on the door of Mr Ellis Hayim, who was less strict in his observance of the Sabbath.

Early the following day seven men, representing the Sephardi group (Ellis Hayim and Michael Speelman), the Russian (Boris Topas and Joseph Bitker), and the German Jews (Dr Kardegg, Fritz Kaufman and Robert Peritz) met. As Shibata described the details of Meisinger's meeting, the atmosphere of the room grew heavier. The Jews were united in terror.

They decided to send someone higher-up to the Foreign Ministry representative. To make a long story short, the "Kempeitai" chief, when he heard what had been suggested, reacted with fury. Who had said such a thing? Where had he got his information? Terrified, the man implicated the Jewish leaders. Within 48 hours, the vice-consul Shibata and those seven men, were arrested, and put into Bridge House Prison. The terrible treatment they suffered is written in the book, *The Fugu Plan*, by Martin Tokayer and Mary Savertz. After weeks of beatings, Shibata was deported in shame back to Tokyo, under the threat of immediate execution if he so much as set foot in China in the next 50 years. The seven community leaders were punished severely, but they were not executed. Before being freed, each was subjected to a stern lecture by the prison sergeant. "How could you believe such nonsense, that we Japanese would harm you? We are

your friends. We have always treated you well. Now go - do not spread any more false rumours. And tell your co-religionists that no harm will come to them from the Japanese." And none did. Shibata had been unwise in his initial reaction to Meisinger's proposals. Slaughtering the Jews of Shanghai did not bear scrutinising by Tokyo. Meisinger's dream was doomed. Even to accommodate her ally, the Japanese government was unwilling to engage in a "final solution".

The Japanese did not carry out a pogrom - instead they created the first Jewish ghetto in Asia.

In 1942, my late father, Mr Maurice Dangoor, was elected President of the Sephardi Community, and all through the war he had to give the Japanese monthly statements of income and expenditure. He was called from time to time to various departments and subjected to searching questions

could recite the Babylonian Talmud by heart.

The Sephardi Community gave them a Synagogue "The Beth Aharon" for their studies. After the war this Yeshiba went to settle in America.

The Joint Distribution of America sent monthly help to all German Jews. The USA Government allowed the Joint to send through Switzerland US \$30,000 monthly. Another American Orthodox Society sent monthly help to the Yeshiba.

The German Jews were helped splendidly by the Joint. They had their Communal Kitchen, Hospital, Maternity Hospital and Synagogue. Just before the war Mr Horace Kadoorie, son of Sir Elly Kadoorie, collected money, mostly from the Sephardis, and built a school in Hongkew for 600 children, which at the same time became a Communal Centre for Games, Concerts and many other Communal activities. Unfortunately he died recently, so did his brother, Sir Laurence Kadoorie.

After 1910 the Baghdadi Community was officially organised as the Shanghai Jewish Community Association.

Early in the 20th century magnificent Synagogues were built. The Ohel Rachel Synagogue, by Sir Jacob Sassoon, named after his wife Lady Rachel, of Bombay, (the aunt of Mr Percy Gourgey). My husband and I visited it in May 1989, just before the serious trouble in China. It is now an Education Centre for the Chinese, and we were in touch with a Chinese Professor, who was trying to ask the authorities to put a plaque, saying that it was formerly a Jewish Synagogue. The other Synagogue was the Beit Aharon, built by Silas Hardoon. The Ezra and Hardoon families started the Shanghai Jewish School shortly after 1900, and influential Jews founded the Shanghai Jewish Club.

I have heard it written that the Sassoons were so well-known at that time that their name was used by the Chinese for all the Jews. As in a

story recounted by Evelyn Waugh of a Chinese servant explaining Good Friday to a friend. "Number One Sassoon gets nailed to a cross, and other Sassoons get angry."

The Sephardi Jews concentrated in Shanghai after the Community dwindled in Hong Kong because of its lessened commercial importance. They were a clannish lot, they mixed little with the Russian Jews, although the latter were not slow to adapt themselves to the new situation, and quickly learned English, thus communication with other Jews became easier. But the children of both communities attended the Jewish school, which was conducted by Sephardim, many of them Indian born but Iraqi in origin, with a mixed staff of Englishmen and Jews, the language of instruction being English. The Synagogue was the centre of Jewish life in the earlier days. The Beit Aharon Synagogue was named after the multi-millionaire Silas Hardoon who had provided the funds. In his rise to wealth in Shanghai, Hardoon was remarkable. Originally coming to Shanghai as a manager of one of the many Sassoon offices there, Hardoon did business on his own on the side, and later broke away. He concentrated on real estate and in those early days of the 20th century he bought plot after plot of land in what was to become prime property in down-town Shanghai.

This strange personality was something of a recluse and he lived only for his business. For years Hardoon had little to do with other Jews. He attended Synagogue regularly but gave little to the communal chest. In his middle age he married a Chinese woman, but there were no children. Before he built the Synagogue, he had adopted 11 children, some of them Jewish. Hardoon died in the 1930's and was then estimated to be worth around \$60 million, a fantastic sum at that time.

When my husband and I visited



about the Community. The Russian Jews remained free to do business, as Russia entered the war only a short time before the end of the war.

Josef Tekoah's father was President of the Ashkenazi Community. He, Joseph, became the Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations, and then Chancellor of the Ben Gurion University. He died in 1992. Just before the war about 250 Polish Jews belonging to the "Mirer Yeshiva" arrived in Shanghai. It was one of the most important Yeshibas in Poland. They all studied the Talmud the whole day and 60 or 70 of them

Shanghai in May 1989, just before the Tinnamen Square Massacre, there were only peaceful demonstrations taking place.

For me it was a search for my roots - the homes we lived in, our school, and the French Club. But I found I was a stranger in my own home town. For me Shanghai is a city of "Gones". Gone is its reputation as the "Paris of the Orient", although now there are foreigners who are bringing their skills, and capitalist vitality. Gone are the bright lights of night life. Shanghai is still a bustling, busy, crowded metropolis.

Standing out among the buildings is the Peace Hotel, formerly the Cathay Hotel, for many pre-war years Shanghai's finest hotel, with its elegant stores, great dining-rooms and ballrooms. It belonged to Sir Victor Sassoon.

In 1946, after the war had ended, with the Chinese Communists sweeping the country, the Jews of Shanghai prepared to leave, some to Israel, and many to America.

After we returned back from Shanghai in May 1989 we received a letter from a Chinese Professor, who was very keen to accompany us after he heard my family had lived next door to the one he was now in. (Each room has been occupied by one family, as I am sure is still the case now).

This is what he wrote: "Shortly after you left Shanghai in

1946 all the six houses in the terrace came into the possession of the Bank of Chinese Products, under the control of Mme. Chiang Kai-Chek's brother. In 1949, when the old regime was overthrown, the People's Bank of China took the houses over and let them to its employees."

Recently I happened to find a very interesting book in the city library entitled China Hong Kong List which lists almost all the streets, houses and



owners in Shanghai since 1935. During the Second World War there were as many as 18,000 Jews in Shanghai, most of whom came from Europe to escape the Fascist persecution. After the war they began to leave for the U.S. and America. By 1949, when China was liberated, the number of Jews that lived in the city dropped to 10,000. In the following years, with the help of the Government, about 9,700 emigrated

to Israel, and by 1957 there were only one hundred left. The number further diminished to ten in 1976 and to zero in the early eighties. Among those that lived in Shanghai, many were very outstanding persons, such as Ferdinand Adler, master violinist in the Municipal Council Orchestra, Alfred Wittenberg, a distinguished professor of music, Max Warsch, a famous vocalist and leading singer of the Synagogue chorus. Things here are returning to normal." Professor YuanJia Mou - 1989

I would like to add that since we were of Iraqi nationality, we were not interned and only had to wear pink arm bands. This was because the Germans recognised Rashid Ali as the legitimate Government of Iraq, and so we were not considered real enemies. The British residents were all interned.

On a lighter note - An American tourist went to a restaurant in Shanghai, and asked the waiter "Are there any Chinese Jews?" The waiter said, "I will go and find out." He came back and said "Sorry Sir, we only have Tomato juice and Orange juice."

A Japanese officer asked my father, "Tell me please, why do the Germans hate the Jews so much?" My father replied, "because we are of Asian origin". That remark wasn't lost on the officer.

Dr. Naim Dangoor O.B.E.
Editor - The Scribe

We wish all our members Hanukkah Sameach

Chanukah is the Jewish holiday celebrating the victories of the Maccabees over the Seleucid Syrian government, about 164 BCE. These events are historical and were recorded by Roman historians as well. The story is told in the Book of the Maccabees, which was apparently translated from a Greek original into Hebrew. The word "Hanukkah" means dedication, and the name refers to rededication of the temple following the victory over the Seleucid armies.

Tradition relates that the liberators found only sufficient sanctified oil to light the temple lamp for one day, but it lasted for eight days until new oil could be prepared. Therefore, the holiday is celebrated by lighting an eight branched candelabrum, the Hanukkiyah for each of eight days, lighting an additional candle or lamp each day. Hanukkah is also called "the festival of lights".



ISRAEL'S MESSENGER

Shanghai: Friday,

26th June, 1908 - 5668

UTTERLY FALSE.

The following article has been going the rounds of the American Press recently. It is hardly necessary to state that the whole story is a pure fabrication, manufactured by a demented journalist whose object is to misrepresent and exaggerate the influence of the Jewish people among the aristocratic rulers of the world. In giving it publicity in ISRAEL'S MESSENGER we wish to remind our readers that the influence which the Press could exercise in these days is both for good and evil. A perusal of the article which we print below, indited by the London correspondent of the *Brooklyn Citizen*, cannot fail to arouse mingled laughter and resentment. "England's real ruler is not Edward but a multi-millionaire Jew"! says the anonymous correspondent. It is time the theory of "Rich as a Jew" should be torpedoed and exploded to the four winds of heaven. Nothing could be further from the truth. The whole article is a tissue of falsehood and misleading and tends to misrepresent the Jew in the eyes of his neighbours. The time has come when such baseless canards should be consigned to the domain of fiction and not to reality, for they serve no good purpose and tend to do considerable harm to the Jew:—

England's real ruler is not Edward VII., but a multi-millionaire Jew, Sir Ernest Cassel, son of a Hamburg banker. This naturalized Englishman has greater influence at court than any born Britisher from the Prime Minister downward, and the pressure the Eylonburg round table clique exerted on the German Emperor is child's play compared with the influence of Cassel over Kaiser Wilhem's English uncle.

Edward never makes any important move without consulting Cassel. He never goes anywhere but Cassel accompanies him, and, if he gets into difficulties, it is to Cassel he appeals for help. Englishmen are jealous of the paramount influence the Hamburger exerts over the tenant of Buckingham Palace, but there is no way of ousting him, for Edward is under the deepest debt of gratitude that a monarch can owe to one of his subjects.

Cassel earned the right to be father confessor to Edward, when Queen Victoria died. It is customary, when a monarch mounts the British throne, for Parliament to be informed whether the new King has any debts. If he has, a discussion on them can be forced, and a lot of nasty things said, before the House of commons votes the money for the liquidation of the royal debtor.

When Queen Victoria passed away at Osborne, King Edward, had he been an ordinary citizen, would have been called a bankrupt. Throughout his career as Prince of Wales he had lived way beyond his means and though his mother several times had helped him out of financial holes, his first worry, when he came to succeed her, was the long list of those to whom he owed money.

Sir Ernest came to the front just at the right time. Immediately after Victoria's death, he hurried to Osborne and offered to take over all the liabilities of the King. Edward accepted, and Arthur Balfour, then Prime Minister, was able to announce to the House of Commons, to the surprise of everyone, that "there were no debts."

Cassel did not stop at paying off the King's obligations. He undertook the reorganization of the whole expenditure of the court. Plain business methods were introduced, useless servants dismissed, third-class railway tickets furnished traveling royal flunkeys, castle waste reduced to a minimum, and now, thanks to Cassel, the British court has the reputation of being more economically managed than any other royal household in Europe.

This is what has given Cassel his influence over Edward, and though he has aroused much jealousy, nobody has ever accused him of using his position except for beneficial results. He is a great believer in the peace program of King Edward and has really directed the diplomatic journeys of England's rulers to the continental courts.

Cassel's greatest accomplishment was the financing of the recently completed Egyptian irrigation scheme, which makes unnecessary the centuries-old dependence of Egyptian farmers on the overflowing of the Nile. Even Lord Cromer was unable to carry out this improvement, because Egypt refused to allow him to touch public money for it.

Cassel stepped in, put the scheme on a business basis, provided the money, and is making a fortune for himself, for the profits now are much more than sufficient to pay interest and establish a sinking fund, Cassel's Egyptian work established his reputation as one of the great financ-

ial geniuses of the age.

Edward repeatedly has said he regards Cassel as the cleverest man in England. Recently at a state banquet, Edward told a guest the secret of Cassel's success. Somebody asked him how Cassel succeeded in building up the Nile irrigation scheme. "One of Oscar Wilde's plays will tell you," said Edward.—London Correspondance of *Brooklyn Citizen*.

NOTES FROM INDIA.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, APRIL, 1908.

The Hon. Mr. S. M. Moses, definitely retires from India; and the Jewish community of Bombay for whose progress, he evinced so strenuous efforts, find to their regret that the Hon. gentleman, has in the interest of health, been compelled to dissociate himself, from the active work, as head of the Firm of Messrs. David Sassoon and Co. Bombay, and in other responsible capacities, as a committee member to Firms and institutions, representing other branches of commercial pursuits. Such as the Bank of Bombay, the Chamber of Commerce, the Port Trust and the Legislative council of the Governors of Bombay over which the gentleman exercised so great an influence. He left India last month, for England, amidst the best wishes of his friends and acquaintances, after a long and arduous career in the Firm of Messrs David Sassoon and Co, extending over forty-nine years,—a period of jubilee. He took prominent part in Jewish communal and charitable Institutions and honoured the Beni-Israel community by his presence at the bicentary celebration of their Synagogue Shaar Harahamin—the oldest Jewish place of worship in Bombay. He patronised education and took a keen interest in the David Sassoon's Reformatory Bombay for which the Government nominated him as Fellow of the Bombay University. We cannot do more than wish him to enjoy long his well-earned holiday.

A word more about the Hon. gentleman is, we deem, necessary for the information of the readers of ISRAEL'S MESSENGER, and we therefore only quote *verbatim* an announcement appearing in the *Bombay Government Gazette* of 3rd April 1908.

"I Charles Nissim heretofore called by the name of Silas Meyer Moses, of Bombay, hereby give public notice that for fairly reasons I have formally renounced the use of my said name of Silas Meyer Moses and assumed and adopted the name of Charles Nissim instead of the said name of Silas Meyer Moses."



CHUSAN ROAD CHATTER

Issue 406 IYS

Hongkew Division

In Memoriam - Kurt Weinbach

Mark Hare

Wartime youth didn't hinder Kurt Weinbach's ability to love

Kurt Weinbach «was always an optimist, and always funny,» says Sheila Weinbach, his wife of 51 years. And when he talked about growing up in Austria under Nazi rule, «he never told people how the Nazis killed family and friends. He told people how their (Gentile) neighbors saved his father's store on Kristallnacht» - Nov. 9, 1938, the «night of breaking glass» when Nazi mobs rampaged through Vienna destroying Jewish businesses and synagogues. «He wanted people to know they could make a difference,» she says. Kurt Weinbach, 82, died in late September. His wartime childhood formed the man he became but did not leave him bitter and angry. Instead, he learned to love life and the people in his. Israel Weinbach, Kurt's father, served in the Austrian army during World War I as a clerk and unit photographer - who, on trips to Vienna to buy film, would deliver photos to the families of soldiers he knew.

After the war, he returned to his watchmaking business in Vienna. When the Germans annexed Austria in 1938, Gen. Heinrich Stumpf, Israel Weinbach's commanding officer during the war, was put in charge of Vienna. Kurt's father sent the general a congratulatory letter

and was invited to visit him at the elegant Hapsburg palace. He took young Kurt with him so that the boy could be a messenger to the family in the event something happened to the father. The meeting was friendly, and the general, who liked the elder Weinbach, promised to alert the family when it was time to leave. He kept his word, advising them to get out of Austria in early 1941 or risk losing their lives. Getting out was easier said than done. Few countries were taking Jews at the time, but Kurt's older brother, Bert, had made it safely to China and the family followed, settling in Tientsin (now Tianjang), a city near Beijing. Bert and Gen. Stumpf arranged for them to travel on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, Sheila says, a glorious train and a beautiful ride, despite the circumstances. «And Kurt got a souvenir» in Siberia, she says. Like all 12-year-olds, he took advantage of a stop to make a snowball, without his gloves, and wound up with frostbite, the scars from which he displayed for the rest of his life.

In China, Kurt attended a Jewish school and learned Russian, Chinese, Japanese and English. The family arrived in Tientsin during the Japanese occupation, but soon the U.S. Marines arrived, 40,000 strong,

Sheila says. And because Kurt could speak both English and Chinese, the American commander enlisted his help in billeting the troops. «He loved it,» she says. «He would go to a building owner and say, In the name of Harry Truman and the United States government, I am confiscating your building.»

After the war, the Weinbachs eventually made their way to Israel, where Kurt served in the new Israeli army. In 1957, his mother, by then widowed, wanted to reunite the family in the United States; Bert had already settled in Rochester. The family arrived in 1958. «We met in 1959 at the International Folk Dance Festival at the YWCA,» Sheila says. «We soon organized a singles club at the JCC (Jewish Community Center),» and they were married in 1960. Kurt had lived in four countries, seen the horrors of war, witnessed the birth of a new nation and spoke a dozen languages. He landed a job as a purchasing agent for Rochester Telephone and later, Frontier Communications.

He had an eye for the deal, Sheila says, and he was a natural as a purchasing agent. The only concession to a childhood of hardship and shortages, she says, was a tendency to over-buy. «We always had so much stuff,

portable radios, flashlights, batteries, even TVs.»

Kurt was well-traveled, but «I was a simple Joseph Avenue girl,» Sheila says, born and raised in Rochester, graduating from Franklin High School. Her father, Morris Gissin, ran an electrical supply store on Joseph, and was a self-taught painter who captured vivid images of life along the avenue - many of which hang in the Weinbachs Brighton home, along with hundreds of Kurt's family photos, and important documents the family carried on their escape from Vienna and paintings done by Kurt's mother. They liked to be reminded every day of the family history, and to let their eyes fall on images and words that meant so much to them. Sheila and Kurt had two children, son David and daughter Susan. There are two grandsons.

In the eulogy she delivered for her father, Susan referenced her childhood: «He was the father who could turn the most mundane things into "ancient Chinese secrets,"

who taught us how to count to 10 in Hebrew, German, Chinese and Japanese, who took us along on business trips to places of great historic value, like Elmira...» He was a wonderful father, Sheila says, «because he knew what mattered in life and he never sweated the small stuff.» Both Weinbachs loved Rochester and were huge boosters, promoting all their city has to offer to friends and acquaintances and talking full advantage of its culture, especially the Rochester International Jazz Festival.

Kurt retired at 61. «His motto was, "When the kids are educated and the mortgage is paid, you should only work if you're having fun," Sheila says. But in retirement, «We weren't much for watching TV,» she says. In the summer, they attended concerts nearly every night, and enjoyed lectures and dancing - to almost any kind of music.

And Kurt continued, as he had since he arrived in Rochester, to tell his survivor's story wherever he was

invited - at schools, service clubs, senior living centers, churches. He always felt it was important to share the story, to talk about the power of human resiliency, of faith of family. «And when we would travel,» Sheila says, «we would ride public buses and go to supermarkets. Kurt wanted to see how people really live, what they buy and how they work. That's what interested him.»

Over the years, Sheila says, she met many survivors like Kurt. They didn't have a higher than average incidence of mental illness, she says, because they often came from loving backgrounds, with parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles who cared for each other. «Even those who were the only survivors in their families,» she says, «still have a zest for life.»

That was Kurt Weinbach.

Kurt Weinbach, of Brighton, plays with grandson, Alexander. Weinbach died suddenly in September.

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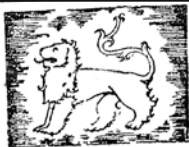
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When Past and Present Collide: Reshaping the Future of the Historic Shanghai Ghetto

by Erica Lyons

Seemingly there is a real tension in Shanghai's Tilanqiao district. The tension is between competing interests: historic significance versus a rapidly growing urban population (in need of housing and basic communal amenities) versus businesses looking to expand and cash in on the plethora of potential opportunities. At the center of the debate over land use and redevelopment lies the fate of what was once the Shanghai Jewish Ghetto.

But Shanghai is a city where the tension between sharp contrasts defines its beauty, where old and new clash to create something entirely one-of-a-kind, something wholly Shanghai. Urban growth is often dramatic and the only certainty often is rapid change. While much of Tilanqiao is rundown and ramshackle, its notable features include Ohel Moshe Synagogue, Tilanqiao Prison, Xiahai Temple, Wayside Park (today's Huoshan Park), the former site of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the Jewish Settlement in Ward Road (today's Changyang Road) and the Mascot Roof Garden. The Ohel Moshe Synagogue, established in 1907, already recently underwent its own massive renovation and was re-opened to the public in 2008. It now serves as the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum and is a true monument to the friendship between the Jews and the Chinese who called Hongkou home.

A collaborative project launched in October 2010 is now well underway to develop a conservation plan for the former ghetto, within the context and reality of Shanghai's rapid urban development. The participating

students from Tel Aviv University and from Shanghai's Tongji Urban Planning and Design Institute of Tongji University will soon present their proposed designs at a joint forum in Shanghai in October 2011. At the forum, their projects will be presented to the local government as well as to the general public.



At their heart, the students' designs reflect the understanding of the historic significance of the former Jewish Ghetto in Shanghai. While urban renewal can sometimes result in the demolition and destruction of entire neighborhoods and a burying of the past, the proposed designs reflect a real sensitivity to the historical significance of the ghetto. But what really is the value of the memory of approximately 30,000 Jews who left the city sixty years ago, after inhabiting the ghetto for a period of time that spanned no more than 16 years, in a country of one billion with a history that spans from ancient times to the present? Well, as

the popularity of the former ghetto as a tourist attraction continues to grow, there is a real economic value that is perhaps easier to quantify than the value of sentiment, but the importance of this area in the collective memory of the Chinese of Hongkou and the former Jewish residents who lived among them can't be dismissed.

Street view of the former Jewish Ghetto area

This ghetto was not like the infamous ghettos of Europe where Jews were rounded up and forced to live in squalid conditions only to await transport to death camps. The Shanghai Ghetto, though conditions were certainly far from ideal, was a safe haven that saved the lives of tens of thousands of Jews with literally nowhere else in the world to go to escape the horrors of Europe. Shanghai was the last open port and its established Jewish community mobilized to meet the needs of their brethren as the already crowded city, hit by wartime shortages and serious deprivations, swelled overnight. The Jewish refugees lived side-by-side with their Chinese neighbors and together they weathered the harsh realities of life in a war-ravaged city and Japanese occupation. It is a story of true friendship and cooperation between two peoples even in the most adverse of conditions.

There is an incredible sense of responsibility on the part of the collaborative team and its visionary leaders that include Dr. Wang Jun, Architect, Chief Researcher at Shanghai's Tongji Urban Planning and Design Institute, Tongji University and Professor Moshe

Margalith, Architect, UNESCO Chair on Modern Heritage and Head of the Tel Aviv Institute for Study and Research of Architecture, Tel Aviv University. Ultimately, the upcoming October forum to be held in Shanghai anticipates the official foundation of the Sino Jewish Innovation Center in Shanghai that will promote the continuation of the cooperation between the Chinese and Jewish people. The Institute will lead with the theme “learning from the past looking forward to the future” and will present the continuous and unique role of Shanghai as a multi-cultural city, a center where dialogue and understanding between diverse peoples is evident.

The founders of the Sino Jewish Innovation Center also hope to encourage the responsible conservation of the entire area. A “mixed use” environment is envisioned consisting of residential, business, tourism and commerce. This “mixed use” concept actually mirrors the world of the former Jewish ghetto. According to Hila Sofrin, one of the students participating in the project from the Tel Aviv University team, “This notion existed very much so in the days of the Jewish Ghetto. The Jews brought with them the cafes from Austria and many other institutes of education and culture.”

From the students’ designs (clockwise) by Hila Sofrin, Adi Mor, Adi Mor, Adi Mor

The titles of the Tel Aviv University students’ work alone speak to the complexity of the task at hand, “Slated for Demolition” by Adi Mor, “Small touch big difference” by Oded Narkis, “MiroShanghai” by Erez Gross & Dori Sadan, and “redefining 0.00+” by Hila Sofrin. In their briefs they discuss the competing forces at work and the delicate balances between modernity and history, technology and authenticity, and Chinese and European influences that the ultimate design will need to encompass.



Street view of the former Jewish Ghetto area

In the true spirit of multi-cultural cooperation and sensitivity, the Tel Aviv student team indicated that, “the Chinese propositions tried to embed Jewish aspects into their projects and the Israeli propositions tried to embed the Chinese spirit into their projects.” Each project raises different questions regarding conservation, modernity, community and urbanism but all reflect common ground and unified visions achieved through the yearlong multi-disciplinary research of the area’s historic and contemporary populations. This research broadened the Chinese and Israeli teams’ understanding that the redevelopment of Tilanqiao is not just about places but is about people, their culture, values and heritage.

Together the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITRAP), Tangji University, Tel Aviv University and the Zalman Shazar Center will jointly study all the proposals for the conservation plan. Throughout 2012, the joint cooperative will move forward with the formulation of strategic planning for the Ghetto’s conservation and the foundation of the Sino Jewish Innovation Center in the former ghetto area. By the end of

2012, an exhibition of the Ghetto’s past and future will feature in Beit Hatfutsot, the Diaspora Museum on the campus of Tel Aviv University.

Proposed designs by Oded Narkis

Ultimately a development plan will be created that will aim to blend the modern, urban landscape with the historical and the East with the West and will combine elements of all the proposed designs. Whereas previous proposals for the redevelopment of the area have not gone forward, Ms. Sofrin reflects the collaborative teams’ view that, “cooperation of Jews and Chinese might just be the solution.”

In spite of the project’s noticeable achievements, the financing is rather difficult. Contributions to this project should be extended to the order of: Tel Aviv University, Prof. Moshe Margalith, Head Tel Aviv Institute, Shanghai Ghetto Project. Please email mm@margalith-arch.com for details.

Erica Lyons is Founder/Editor-in-Chief, Asian Jewish Life. Copyright Asian Jewish Life. Reprint-ed with permission. Site of the former JDC office

Tientsin Photo Exhibition

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Ambassador Gao Yanping delivering a speech



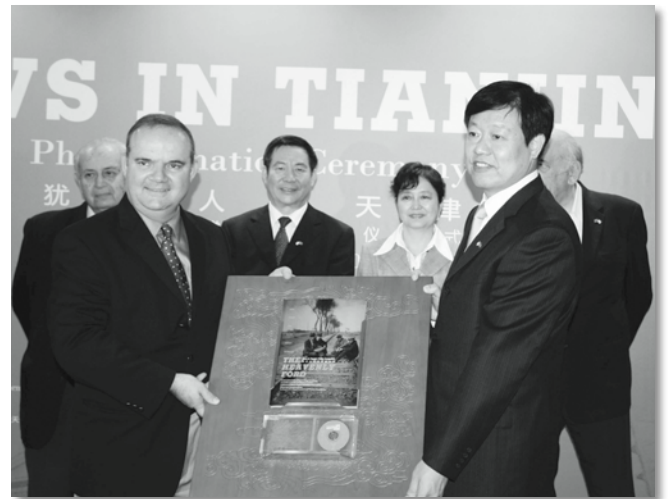
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Silas Aaron Hardoon (1851-1931): Business, Politics

by Chiara Betta

University of Indianapolis, Athens (UIA). Condensed from the original paper by Chiara Betta, who holds the copyright Hardoon and Trade Diaspora of Baghdadi Jews

“Salih Harun” or “Saleh Haron”, then Anglicised as Silas Aaron Hardoon, was born to a poor Jewish family in the city of Baghdad in 1851. Five years later the Hardoons left the ailing Ottoman empire and, like other Jews of the Baghdad area, searched for fortune in Bombay. Once they arrived in the city they found protection under the wing of the local “Baghdadian Jewish trading community” that was headed by David Sassoon, a merchant-prince, renowned philanthropist and the scion of Baghdad’s most eminent Jewish family. Hardoon attended a charitable school funded by Sassoon and, as an adolescent, he joined the firm D. Sassoon & Co., which supervised a large commercial empire. In 1868, after his employers had noticed his remarkable business acumen, he was sent to Hong Kong to gain experience of the Chinese market. However, six years later he was, for some unknown reason, suddenly dismissed. Penniless, he took a third-class deck passage to Shanghai where the tiny local community of Baghdadi Jews helped him to secure a badly paid job as rent collector and godown watchman at the local branch of David Sassoon, Sons & Co. Most importantly, Baghdadi Jewish communities of Shanghai and Hong Kong represented individual “nodes” of the trade diaspora of Baghdadi Jews which extended from London to Shanghai and operated under the aegis of the British Empire. As a result of their

ancillary position to the British, Baghdadi Jews, who lived outside the Ottoman empire underwent a notable process of Anglicisation after the middle of the nineteenth century. They discarded their traditional dress, adopted English tastes and manners and lived a culturally hybrid lifestyle in westernised domestic spaces. Hardoon himself wore Western dress, spoke English, though with a thick Arabic accent, drank whiskey and took on the British passion for gardening.

From Rags to Riches

From the first moment Hardoon moved to Shanghai, he could foresee the exceptional development of the city’s foreign settlements, areas administered by foreign municipal councils, which blossomed into a westernised metropolis by the beginning of the twentieth century. Thanks to his commercial shrewdness he quickly rose among the local ranks of D Sassoon, Sons & Co and secured exceptionally profitable real estate deals on behalf of his employers. At the same time he also invested his own savings in land and constantly acquired pieces of property which yielded him good rents for re-investments in other lots. By 1882 Hardoon switched his interest to the cotton market. He left D Sassoon, Sons & Co and established a cotton brokerage, a venture that failed within a short time. In 1886 he then resumed his career as real estate developer at E D Sassoon & Co, which had been established by

David Sassoon’s second son Elias David in 1867. In less than a decade Hardoon, who was in charge of real estate investments and also of opium dealings, was appointed partner and was in effect one of the firm’s most valuable assets. His entrance in Shanghai’s commercial elite was then marked by his appearance in 1893 as a member of the Shanghai club, Shanghai’s leading British club. Whilst working for E D Sassoon & Co Hardoon continued to invest all his savings in real estate in the International Settlement. Since he constantly lacked liquid capital he raised cash for real estate investments by mortgaging his properties and also by dealing in opium, a legal commodity between 1858 and 1918. Thus in Chinese Shanghai Hardoon was known as a dealer of tu, a word that meant both land and opium. By 1911, when he finally left E D Sassoon & Co, he owned large land assets in the Central and Western districts of the International Settlement and was in the process of acquiring properties on Nanking Road, which became Shanghai’s most fashionable commercial thoroughfare within a few years. As a result, prices of properties along the road skyrocketed prompting Hardoon to become one of Shanghai’s wealthiest men.

“Going Native”

At the beginning of the Republican period Hardoon was not only Shanghai’s main real estate tycoon but also the only prominent foreign merchant who had established close

and intimate ties with the Chinese socio-cultural milieu. Since his arrival in Shanghai Hardoon had, in fact, undergone a notable and gradual process of cross-cultural adaptation in the Chinese environment and, as a result, had absorbed Chinese patterns of behavior and had adopted an increasingly Chinese lifestyle. The main force behind Hardoon's

increasingly close relationship with Chinese society was his wife Luo Jialing (Liza Roos) (1864-1941), a Buddhist Eurasian - possibly of Jewish origin¹ - who completely identified with her Chinese background. She was a staunch Buddhist, believed in ancestor worship, used only Chinese medicine and appreciated Chinese popular culture. Since she

did not have natural children she manipulated the Chinese traditional family system and at the turn of the twentieth century she adopted a number of Chinese children in order not to turn into a "hungry ghost" after death. By permission of

Dr. Naim Dangoor OBE
Editor – The Scribe

New Shanghai

by Pamela Yatsko

The rocky rebirth of China's legendary city

Shanghai, perched on the southern coast of China, is known as one of the world's largest cities. But until recently, it was also known as one of the sleepest, a far cry from the laissez-faire energy of its colonial past. Then, in the early 1990's, the Chinese government decided that Shanghai would be developed into a world-class financial and commercial centre, a city capable of leading China into the new millennium. The recipe seemed simple enough. Take plenty of money and 20 million people, and mix until skyscrapers form. Add generous amounts of hyperbole, a lot of mobile phones and a stock market. And - there you have it. In certain respects, Shanghai looks like a financial centre. There are certainly plenty of skyscrapers; at one time the city contained one-fifth of the world's construction cranes. The planners looked at Hong Kong, London and

New York, and concluded that glass towers were the defining trait of a successful market economy. They simply failed to understand the difference between the outward symbols of capitalism and the social underpinnings of it. In essence, this is the difference between hardware and software. The government focused on new buildings and new roads, even while the software of prosperity - a reliable legal regime, openness to new ideas, freedom to innovate - languished. A key problem was that, during the Communist era in Shanghai, any trace of capitalist ability had been obliterated. If anything, the city administrators retained a traditional Maoist leaning well into the 1990's, with a strong emphasis on government control. They made the mistake of believing that innovation could be planned. The result was mainly confusion.

At the factory level, most managers interpreted the new direction as permission for them personally to make as much money as possible, causing an epidemic of corruption that shows no sign of abating. In some ways, too, the city's vast size is also a problem. One can make a great deal of money without having to look beyond the city borders. The executives of foreign companies who poured into the city ten years ago have also become deeply dissatisfied, and now tend to focus on the local market. Those who are looking for a national base have moved to Beijing. But Shanghai's substantial industrial base and strategic position as a gateway to the interior of southern China make it a logical centre for manufacturing and trade. It may one day even become the regional financial centre it is supposed to be.
From the Times Literary Supplement

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A story of lasting friendship

Animating Jewish-Chinese Relationships by

Erica Lyons

Judaism and Israel are hot topics in China. Over ten Chinese universities now offer programs in Judaic Studies, at least one offering a doctoral program. China's state-owned television network, CCTV, recently aired a documentary entitled "Walk into Israel - Land of Milk and Honey", its first series on Israel. The story of the Jews in Shanghai, along with architect Haim Dotan's own China story made headlines. And shortly after the May opening of the World Expo in Shanghai, the Chinese government granted the Jewish community in Shanghai the long-awaited permission to again use for worship the Ohel Rachel Synagogue, a historic synagogue built just after the turn of the 20th century.

The growing ties between Chinese and Jews helped set the scene for the release of director Want Tianyun's animated film, *A Jewish Girl in Shanghai*. It not surprisingly is self-cited as the first Chinese animated film to portray the Holocaust. While some might question whether it really portrays the Holocaust, which largely is just a backdrop for a family drama, for many Chinese the movie will be their first introduction to the destruction of European Jewry. The film's producers also refer to *A Jewish Girl in Shanghai* as the first animated film to express the Chinese-Israeli friendship; an increasingly important relationship for both sides.

A Jewish Girl in Shanghai tackles many difficult topics as it tells the story of a Jewish girl named Rena who along with her brother

Mishalli, seeks refuges in Shanghai after escaping from Europe. While awaiting the arrival of their parents, Rena meets a young Chinese boy, A-gen, and immediately the two forge a friendship. They share their cultures with one another and help one another to ease their burdens of everyday living in a war-torn world where poverty, loss and conflict are their shared realities.

The screenplay is based on a graphic



novel also entitled *A Jewish Girl in Shanghai* published by the East China Normal University Press in 2008. Wu Lin from Shanghai himself, wrote both the graphic novel and the screenplay. Wu says the book was huge success, selling 4,000 copies in the first half year since its release. The book, published in China, has a somewhat limited market as it was only published in English though the film version is in Chinese and subtitled in English. A Hebrew edition of the book, Wu said in the interview with AJL, is in the pipeline. A year after the book's publication, he created the screenplay for the animated film version, hoping this would allow the story to reach a broader China-based audience.

The film version premiered

throughout Shanghai in May and then debuted in Israel at the Jerusalem International Film Festival in July. Wu adds that this was the first Chinese film to be included in the Jerusalem Film Festival and was very well received. It was nominated for an Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman's Award for Artistic Achievement in a Holocaust-related film.

Wu, sitting at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Macau the week after the Jerusalem premiere, spoke enthusiastically about his affinity for the Jewish people. He adds that events marking the end of the Second World War initially inspired him to tell this story taken from the pages of a history little known to most, Jew and Chinese alike. Wu, who started his entry into the workforce as a history

teacher, explains that: "In 2005, for the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the victory of anti-fascism war, many newspapers and magazines in Shanghai published the stories of Jewish refugees in Shanghai during the 1940s". He wanted to learn more and knew that he would somehow develop this into the framework of a novel "to take a small story and build it up," he explains. He was moved by the struggle the Jews endured during that time and saw parallels between their struggles and those of the Chinese against Japan and explains that it was a very hard time for both people in the face of fascism.

Within Shanghai, the story of the Hongkou Jewish ghetto is now familiar to many and, he explains, has

made an impression on both Chinese and Jews. "It was not forgotten for our people". He talks about the number of former Shanghai Jews who still hold China in a special place in their hearts, a sentiment repeated throughout many recent memoirs and films produced about the Jewish experience in China. Over the years, Wu has met many of these former Jewish Shanghai residents who spent their childhood in the city while on various business trips to the United States. He also had the opportunity to meet other former Jewish residents of Shanghai at the Jerusalem Film Festival.

Their wartime stories of life among Shanghai's Jews and Chinese helped inspire Wu to write his novel. "Mutual help and support during the harsh time illustrates the harmony and friendship between the two races," he says. "Hence I came up with the idea of writing a book to demonstrate this period of history which would also provide more or less positive impetus to the peace of the world".

Further inspiration came from Wu's time living for several years in Los Angeles, where he worked as a company manager. While in California, Wu made a number of Jewish friends. He says he loosely based the character of the brother Mishalli on Jerry Moses, a friend from Los Angeles, whose real Shanghai story similar to that of Wu's characters. Originally from Breslau (what is today known as Wroclaw, Poland), Moses, like the fictional Rena and Mishalli and approximately 35,000 other Jews, was offered a safe haven in Shanghai's Hongkou district. While living in Los Angeles, Wu explains that he was able to get help on some of the details in the book from Moses and other Jewish friends, especially information on Jewish practices and beliefs. Overall, Wu says the film is "both true and untrue," a composite of collective memory and history fused with some fictionalized elements. "The main

characters were all based on real prototypes ... I can't promise it's 100% accurate, but I think it fits the background of the time".

To tell the story of the Jews of Shanghai, Wu also includes the background information in the film to give viewers a glimpse of the Nazi campaign against the Jews and the war on the Western front. For instance, he includes Kristallnacht and scenes of the bombing and destruction throughout Europe. In one scene, Rena and Mishalli are first prancing through the idyllic rural countryside of their early childhood only to be torn from it by bombs exploding around them. Later on we learn that their mother was killed by the Nazis and her hair was woven into a rug, giving the children a glimpse of the Germans' incomprehensible evil and cruelty.

At first, Wu thought about making his story for adults but in the end decided to write for children because he hopes that this story will influence the future generation. As Wu explains, although the film is for children, "reality is the first priority that we pursued during the stage of creation. As a famous saying goes, truth is power. Realism does give people power and advantages to pursue a better future. The script was composed by me, which is certainly based on real stories, while the paint of the animation was required to be neat, plain and a little bit of Chinese style". The film has hit a chord with young audiences in China and Israel alike, he says, explaining that Chinese children, like Israeli children, both laughed and cried at the screenings. "This is really a China-Israel story".

Wu says that Chinese have a great interest in learning more about Israel and the Jewish people. After returning from Israel in July, he immediately published three very popular articles on his visit in the Chinese press. One article covered the film festival itself, another on how to market a Chinese film to international audiences, and a

final one on his impressions of Israel. He says he is most impressed by the Israelis' spirit of environmentalism and careful use of natural resources. He was impressed the moment he stepped off the plane and saw the airport surrounded by greenery rather than the concrete that characterizes most other international airports. He also laughs and adds that he felt very much at home when at a celebratory dinner in Jerusalem, six dishes were served and everyone finished all the food. This is a cultural reference he explains he can really relate to. He also notes that he, like most Chinese, look up to Jews because "they are very smart people, with so much respect" and he adds, "Marx and Einstein were Jews, you know," a comment made with true admiration. Overall Wu stresses the affinity and love that he, like other Chinese, feel for the Jewish people and he also adds that he knows that this feeling and love is mutual. This is part of the power of the film, that neither Jews nor Chinese forgot this brief shared history. A Jewish Girl in Shanghai, to Wu, is a very meaningful work. He hopes "that it reflects his admiration and respect for Jews". He cites the introduction to the graphic novel, "benevolence and righteousness are the guide of one's soul," it begins.

For the future, Wu reveals that he is planning to write a second animated work in this series that tells Rena's father's untold story, hoping that this too will have the same emotional impact. He explains that he wrote "the front of the face and now needs to write from the back".

"A Jewish Girl in Shanghai" will have its Macau premiere on November 14 at the Macau Jewish Film Festival and its Hong Kong premiere at the Hong Kong Jewish Film Festival on November 21. Wu will be present at both events

(From Asian Jewish Life, Summer 2010)

Ancient Jewish Coins Chinese Chef's Main Course

By Shula Kopf

Xu Long, head chef at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, has literally written the book on Israeli Coins

One of the most passionate collectors of Israeli coins is the head chef in Beijing's Great Hall of the People. When Xu Long isn't cooking Peking duck for visiting heads of state, he devotes his time to researching the history of Jewish coins. It took him 10 years of painstaking study, but last November Xu Long published a 575-page hard-back on the subject, *Money of Ancient Judea and Israel*. Ironically, his book, which is in Mandarin, is one of the most wide-ranging on the subject in any language.

"His book starts with the first coins even minted in Judea during the Persian period in the fourth century BCE and goes up to the Jerusalem of Gold 24-carat bullion coin launched last year by the Bank of Israel," says Arthur Boxer, CEO of the Israel Coins and Medals Corporation (ICMC). "He explains the story behind each coin." Boxer meets Xu Long every year at the International World Money Fair in Beijing, where display of the book helps attract local collectors to the Israeli booth. At a price of 498 yuan, about NIS 250, the book is expensive in China.

"He's an ambassador for us in China," says Boxer. "It's a numismatic handshake between two great ancient cultures."

Last week Boxer and Xu Long met at the ICMC headquarters in Neshet, near Haifa. Xu Long. Visiting for his second time, Xu Long continues to explore sites not on the typical tourist itinerary but that figure on

Israeli currency and coins. Last time he came alone; this time he brought six other coin enthusiasts.

"The first time I came to Israel everything seemed familiar to me because I already knew about places from the coins," says Xu Long. He explains his interest in Israeli coins: "No one can understand the world without understanding the Jews first. For Chinese, Jews are special. They are very smart. You can learn about people and their history through their coins, and know about places from the coins, and since the Jews have had a long and colorful history, the cultural content in Israeli coins is very rich, if not the richest in the world. No other country refers back to its ancient history in its modern coins as does Israel."

The interview took place with the help of a Hebrew-Chinese translator after Xu Long was the guest of honor for a luncheon at the Herzliya Pituah residence of China's ambassador. According to Xu Long, just after the soup (sweet and sour), the conversation turned to his numismatic passion. "The ambassador wanted to know what everyone always asks me, how I happened to become interested in this subject in the first place."

Xu Long was riding his bicycle on one of Beijing's streets when he spotted a foreigner and stopped to ask the man if he spoke French. The foreigner was Albert Kalifa, an Israeli studying Chinese medicine in Beijing, Algerian by birth and fluent

in French.

"He asked me if I would like to teach him French and I said, 'Why not,' Kalifa says in a telephone interview from his home in Kibbutz Nir Eliahu. "We med every day for French lessons for about half a year and he taught me about Chinese customs and way of life."

Kalifa knew of Xu Long's interest in coins and gave him a few Israeli coins. "This aroused a great curiosity in him about Jewish customs and life and he asked many questions. He was insatiable for information about Israel and Judaism," says Kalifa. "During his first visit to Israel, he wanted to see every spot that appears on Israeli paper money and coins. We went to off-the-beaten-track places like Gymnasia Herzliya, Mikve Israel, Beit Bialik, anything connected with coins. He must have taken about 10,000 photos.

"When he travels in the world he also seeks Jewish sites. In Tehran he got a special permit to visit a synagogue. In Rome he went to the Arch of Titus. In Paris he went to a Jewish museum. On this trip he wanted to see a pidyon haben ceremony, Kiddush and a circumcision ceremony, all events that appear on coins. It's unbelievable what he accomplished. A person who doesn't know anything about the history of the Jewish people can learn about it just from reading his book."

One of the mandatory stops for Xu Long when he is here is the Kadman Numismatic Pavilion of the Eretz

Israel Museum in Tel Aviv, where he meets with curator Cecilia Meir.

"The people who come to see us are all crazy about some special field in numismatics, but to see his face light up when I showed him the coins was amazing," says Meir. "He was so excited to touch the ancient coins, not because they are ancient, but because they are Jewish. All the collectors I know have some connection to Israel or to Judaism, but to think that someone who lives so far away and doesn't have any

connection has written such a book is really amazing. He's promoting Jewish culture in China through the coins."

It turns out that Xu Long's hobby is an expensive one. He took some time during this trip to do some shopping - Israeli coins, about 50 kilos worth, says Kalifa. And since he couldn't find a publisher for such an esoteric subject, Xu Long financed some of the book's publication costs himself. "The knowledge I have gained and the Jewish friends I have made, both

in Beijing and in Israel, are priceless," says Xu Long, who is married and has two children. "My wife thinks I'm crazy."

The chef is already planning his next project, a Jewish cookbook in Chinese, and he took some time from his numismatic pursuits to meet with Israeli chefs.

How do you say chicken matza ball soup in Chinese?

(From The Jerusalem Post, March 15, 2011)

From the album of the Kotz family

Photos sent by Igor Kotz from Moscow. He is the son of M. Kotz, brother of Boris and Lev and Dr. Pauline-Zelikovsky



M. Kotz and his grandson Samuel (Musik) Kotz



Dr. Pauline Kotz-Zelikovsky



Shop "Geneva" in Harbin. In the picture first on the right: B.M. Kotz



Tomb-stone on the grave of M. Kotz at the Jewish cemetery in Hong Kong

The Story of Ruth Meets Beijing Opera

By Raphael Mostel

Eugene Kwok/New York Chinese Opera Society

Beijing (formerly Peking) opera is not like anything else. Certainly it's not like Western opera, except to the extent that both art forms have singers act out stories. To an untrained Western ear, the women's voices in Chinese opera can resemble nothing so much as the mewling of cats, as cats and female singers of Chinese opera share the same register - and often style. The men's voices, too, are surprisingly high-pitched. Indeed, nearly all the instruments and voices limit themselves to very high pitches. Almost none of the sounds reach down to the midrange, let alone to the bass range. But then again, Wagner's operas, with the singers bellowing to overcome the huge sound of a giant orchestra, can be equally surprising to an untrained ear.

Involving singing, declamation, gesture, dance, acrobatics and brilliant costuming, Beijing opera is its own highly stylized art form. Since

its beginnings, in the late 18th century (which makes it almost two centuries younger than Western opera), it has developed a vast repertoire that now, thanks to the New York Chinese Opera Society, includes the biblical tale of Ruth.

NYCOS, founded four years ago, is dedicated to giving American performers a chance to develop their artistry and to promoting Beijing opera to the public at large. To that end, as part of their run of three fully produced Beijing operas in as many days at the Michael Schimmel Center for the Arts at Pace University in downtown New York last December, NYCOS gave its "premiere performance" of "The Story of Ruth," a Beijing opera that it created based on the Book of Ruth, co-sponsored by the university's Confucius Institute.

During the many congratulatory speeches preceding the performance, and also elaborating for the Forward briefly onstage afterward, NYCOS founder and Executive Director Chi Chu explained how he came to write the script, with Xiaoru Zhang. He admitted, with more than a twinkle in his eye, "I'm afraid this is all my doing. I thought the Book of Ruth would be an excellent vehicle to attract wider audiences and help them develop a love for Chinese opera - Hispanic, Christian, Jewish audiences.... And the story is also so close to Confucian values, like filial piety, loyalty and hard work."

In adapting the Book of Ruth to suit this Chinese form, however, certain

changes were made. The most extreme is that the closest relative to Ruth's dead husband has become Tusi (Kuixi Han), a drunken, comic-evil, mustachioed boor intent on trying to molest every pretty girl he sees. So even without knowing who she is, his hands are all over Ruth (Charlene Tong) when she first appears in the village. Chinese opera convention renders fights through relatively genteel, generalized gestures, followed by a fragmented series of reaction poses, and this is how NYCOS stages the scene where Boaz (Ruth's future husband, Xiangwei Yu) sees Ruth struggling to free herself and comes to beat Tusi and rescue her.

Related Classical Picks of the Year

Mixing Opera and Zionism Hessler Installed Where Neo-Nazis Roam
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This fight scene makes no mention of the fact that this boor is supposed to be Boaz's cousin. The good Boaz doesn't take much further notice of Ruth until (as instructed by Naomi) she comes to him at night on the threshing floor to ask him to marry her. Ruth even has to remind him that she is the woman whom he saved from rape. The scene with the elders, in which Boaz acquires the land of Naomi's dead husband - and with it, Ruth as his wife - is played out here as a contest between the wise Chief Elder (Jinhong Li, one of the most accomplished actors in the



Biblical Couple: Whatever the language or genre, Ruth (Charlene Tong) ends up with Boaz (Xiangwei Yu)

cast) and his enemy, the scheming Second Elder (Qingyin Yue). The latter advocates for the wicked Tusi and claims that Boaz had sex with Ruth at night in the threshing room. The case turns, however, as in the original, on Tusi's unwillingness to forgo his own inheritance in order to marry Ruth.

Unlike any Western languages, Chinese is a tonal language - that is, the spoken language already has its own particular music: Syllables mean totally different things when pronounced with rising or falling pitches. Indeed, one of the most distinctive features of Chinese opera (Beijing is only one of several kinds of Chinese opera) is the use of a panoply of opera gongs to punctuate the drama with a rhythmic urgency that echoes the text. The variety of high-pitched gongs mimic the various combinations of tonal patterns of the language - rising, falling, rising and then falling, vice versa and so on - further heightening the sense of the language.

Percussion instruments are more dominant here than in Western opera, although the percussion is not used in a rhythmically complex way - as in, say, African music - but rather in a more generic way to establish mood and tempo, whether steady or increasing or decreasing in speed. There are also wind instruments, like various bamboo

flutes and oboelike double reeds, but the 15-piece ensemble in this production is comprised mostly of string instruments, all conducted by Liang Wu, the energetic jing hu, or two-string fiddle, player, who composed the score with Chenglin Huang.

Unlike Western opera, composing for Beijing opera is more a matter of choosing and assembling existing melodies, tropes, rhythms and set pieces and adapting them to the new text and story. The sadness of Naomi as she renames herself Mara ("bitter") is accompanied by a haunting lament on solo erhu, the most popular and soulful two-string fiddle of the Chinese huqin family of bowed-string instruments. The lament, adapted from a traditional melody - often heard as a set piece for similarly sad scenes in other operas - was magnificently played by Huang.

Traditional Beijing opera generally eschews sets by using minimal props, like boxes that can be turned, as needed, into an altar, a throne or a chair. For "Ruth," NYCOS broke with tradition to include several square kiosklke objects that, when turned, revealed a different image, to connote surroundings of fields, home or town as needed. As minimal as traditional stage props are, the costumes are often maximally elaborate, with great emphasis on many brilliant colors

and patterns. For "Ruth," designers Yonwu Cui and Charlene Tong attempted to create Middle Eastern-like costumes, coordinated mostly in restrained off-white (with a rainbow range of colors on the hems), but some of the prominent characters were dressed in the brilliant hues associated with Chinese operas.

The Bethlehem barley harvest was celebrated by four extremely young-looking acrobats in blue tunics, who performed leaping somersaults from standing positions. The supertitles projected the translation of the accompanying song: "The sky is cloudless and under the bright sunshine, golden stalks of barley are frolicking in the harvest field with no end in sight." This conveys well the general decorous tone of Beijing opera. Although such semiprofessional endeavors can often be better intentioned than realized, the NYCOS performers were all proficient, and some - notably Jinhong Li, Quiwei Zhang (Naomi), and Kuixi Han (Tusi) - were more adept than that. The thoroughly professional musicians, however, were the real stars. Just as Naomi's attitude won over Ruth as a convert, so NYCOS's openness and excellence may win converts to this different, unusual art form.

JewishDailyForward-January21,2011

Israel Aerospace to target executive jets to China

As the world's manufacturers of executive jets struggle against the steady drop in sales, initiated by the 2008 global financial crisis, Gulfstream and Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd will target a new plane to tempt wealthy Chinese buyers. According to Globes Newswires services, the plane, produced at IAI's factory in Israel and marketed by Gulfstream, will be renamed the

G-280 and include the number "8", which symbolizes wealth and luck. "The Chinese are very sensitive to the number '8' and Western companies wanting to do business in China often mention the number at some point in negotiations with Chinese companies, including when given a quote. This number is considered a sure winner in China," a Gulfstream executive commented.

After three years of losses by its executive jet division, IAI and Gulfstream's new marketing venture is no surprise.

In its financial report for 2010, IAI reported heavy losses, due to the nose dive in orders for executive jets. Sales of executive jets fell from 70 a year before the crisis to 15-20 a year afterwards.

JewishTimesAsia(IssueOctober2011)

The Shanghai Jewish Communal Association

By Rabbi Dr. J. Zeitlin

Short Historical Extract

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord". The number of Sephardic Jews in Shanghai constantly and vividly interested in a really Jewish life based on the unshakable fundamentals of our Holy Torah gradually increased and required therefore the erection of an organization for the official performance of all tasks generally belonging to Jewish Community. The said words of the Psalmist were realized by Jewish men provided with an ardent Jewish spirit revealed in the foundation of the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association in the year 1910. However, a Sephardic Synagogue Committee was already founded in the year 1870.

This essential Jewish organization arranged regular divine services and Jewish education for boys and girls. In 1900 the first official synagogue was established in Seward Road near Nanking road bearing the name Sheerith Yisrael by Mr. and Mrs. D.E.J. Abraham. Mr. Abraham was symbol of nobility, wisdom and knowledge of the Torah. Mrs. Abraham was chairman of the Ladies Benevolent Society for many years and did wonderful work for the relief of the poor. The synagogue school and mikveh were lodged in the building of the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association. After twelve years a new building had to be acquired in Whangpoo Road with a synagogue and mikveh. In both buildings the Ashkenazi Communal Association had a service room placed at its disposal. The school was also attended by many pupils of the Ashkenazi Association. In 1922 further changes occurred. The synagogue found a new place

in Seward Road while school classes were held in a house situated in Dixwell Road. The frequent alterations were due to the steady enlargement of all spheres of activity of a communal association. Due to the efforts of the late Mr. S. J. Solomon, a very religious and active member of the community, a splendid synagogue was erected in 1927 with study rooms, a valuable library of Jewish literature by the philanthropists Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Haroon bearing the name Beth Aharon, situated at 50 Museum Road.

This synagogue proved to be extremely useful when Jews began to immigrate into Shanghai from Europe. A great service was held in 1939 on Shavuot for the immigrants with more than a thousand people attending. The sermons delivered on the two days of the festival were given by Rabbi Dr. J. Zeitlin. By the kindness of Mr. R.D. Abraham and Mr. I.A. Toeg, the synagogue was then placed at the disposal of the immigrants. It later served as a study hall for the famous rabbinical college - the Mirer Yeshiva - until the year 1944.

Mrs. R.D. Abraham was also distinguished by being active in all relief matters in Hongkew and instituted the Maternity Hospital. Invaluable relief work was done by the Ladies Benevolent Society which included: Mrs. D.E.J. Abraham, Mrs. A.E. Moses, Mrs. M.J. Isaac, Mrs. R.E. Toeg, Mrs. N.F. Nissim and the late Mrs. Annie Brown [wife of Rev. Brown]. Likewise highly responsible work in the relief field was carried out by Mr. Ellis Hayim who has also served as one of the governors of the

Country Hospital for the past twenty years.

Besides the Sheerith Yisrael synagogue, another house of worship was founded, the Beth El Synagogue, situated on Szechuan Road, corner of Peking Road in the center of town where regular services were held on weekdays and on holidays. Since there was urgency for a large synagogue with a modern school house, a beautiful building on Seymour Road was built in 1920 by Sir Jacob Elias Sassoon, Baronet of Bombay, in memory of his wife Rachel and called the Ohel Rachel Synagogue. Sir Jacob held his own services in his private residence every day of the year. His nephew, Sir Victor Sassoon, Bart. also greatly contributed to charities in Shanghai. The communal association attached great importance to educational work, and a great number of pupils wanted to attend a Jewish school. Mr. Isaac Samuel Perry left a bequest of 150,000 taels for a school building on condition that the same amount would be raised by the community. This made it possible to erect a school next to the Ohel Rachel Synagogue. Many donations were received for this purpose, part of it coming from the late Sir Elly Kadoorie, K.B.E. a known promoter of educational works in many countries, and founded schools and hospitals in all parts of the world. His deep interest in Jewish educational and scientific work was also proved in his contribution to the university in Jerusalem. His son, Sir Horace Kadoorie, built a magnificent school house for the pupils in Hongkew. The new school in Seymour Road was opened in 1932 with Reverend

M. Brown as headmaster. He also acted as Minister of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue and was active in all spheres of cultural work. Previously, rabbinical functions had been performed by Rabbi Hirsch from 1918 till 1925 when he left for Johannesburg, South Africa.

The present Committee of the Shanghai Jewish School consists of the following: Mr. I.W.Citrin, Mr. L. Gray, Mr. E.F. Toeg, Mrs. M.J. Isaac, Mr. R. Poliak.

The war affected the activity of the Communal Association. Since the outbreak of the Pacific War all five institutions became one organization administered by the committee members of the association: Isaiah

Jacob, President; S. Moalem, Hon. Secretary; D.E. Levey, Hon. Treasurer. Two beds at the Country Hospital donated by Mr. and Mrs. M.J. Moses were reserved for poor patients and two other beds in the General Hospital were presented by Miss Mary Perry. An essential share in the maintenance of the B'nai Brith Polyclinic established in 1934 by the Shanghai Lodge No. 1102 was taken by the late Sir Elly Kadoorie and Mr. I. Covitt, President of the B'nai Brith Lodge, who presides over the "B'nai Brith Foundation" Shanghai Jewish Hospital, as well as Mr. S.E. Levy, Rev. Brown, Mr. M. Speelman, President of the Relief Committee, the late R. M. Joseph, Mr. Ellis Joseph,

the late Mr. D.E.J. Abraham, Mr. R.D. Abraham and Mr. I.A. Toeg.

During the war, the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association took over the hospital and opened it in November 1942 on Rue Pichon.

Surveying the history of the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association through nearly eight decades of religious, educational, cultural and social achievements by well-disposed patrons, they may well deserved the words of the Torah: "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel".

(Adapted from the Shanghai Almanac 1946/47)

JEWISH SCIENTISTS AMONGST NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS 2011

81

This year's Nobel Prize winners for achievements in Chemistry and Medicine went to Ralph Steinman and Bruce Beutler for Medicine and Israeli professor Daniel Shechtman for Chemistry.

The prize for medicine was given for discoveries on the immune system. Half of the award money was awarded to Steinman, with the other half is to be split between Beutler and biologist Jules Hoffmann. Steinman will receive the prize posthumously; he died three days before the Nobel committee made the announcement. Though he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer four years ago, Steinman was able to prolong his life by using new dendritic cellbased immunotherapy - the same discovery for which he was awarded the prize. Shechtman's award in chemistry was for the discovery of "quasicrystals" - a remarkable mosaic of atoms. The

configuration found was considered impossible and he had to fight a fierce battle against established science. Shechtman works at the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa. The Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to Saul Perlmutter, for the Supernova Cosmology Project at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and University of California, and to Brian P. Schmidt and Adam G. Riess.

Some distinguished Jewish scientists were recently in Hong Kong to attend the awards presentations Daniel Shechtman for the Hong Kong Shaw Prizes. Amongst the winners were, Dr Gerald J Fishman and Bruce Beutler. The Shaw Prize is an international award to honour individuals who are currently active in their respective fields and who have recently achieved distinguished and significant advances.

The Shaw Prize now in its eighth year, was established under the auspices of Run Run Shaw in 2002, is managed and administered by The Shaw Prize Foundation based in Hong Kong. It consists of three annual awards: the Prize in Astronomy, the Prize in Life Science and Medicine, and the Prize in Mathematical Sciences.

Jewish Times Asia - Nov 2011



Professor Bruce Beutler Shaw Laureate in Life Science and Medicine 2011, receiving his award in Hong Kong from the Chief Executive Donald Tsang

Milestones

By Balfoura Friend Levine

Some days, I get the "urge to purge," but so much good stuff has been squirreled away over the years that I find more goodies to keep rather than toss. Here's a clipping, yellowed with age - a birth announcement from the North China Daily News: "On July 12, 1925, at St. Marie's Hospital, Shanghai, to Mr. and Mrs. J. Friend, a daughter." By golly, that's me!

The hospital was run by the French Catholic nuns and located in the French Concession, or Frenchtown as we called it, miles away from where we lived. I regret now that I never asked my parents why I wasn't delivered at our general hospital, also run by Catholic nuns, but located closer to our house in Hongkew. Years later, in the 1930s and '40s, Hongkew became the famous ghetto for the thousands of European refugees who fled to China and were lucky to have missed the Holocaust by a whisker, so to speak.

Another milestone: My kindergarten report shows, among other remarks, "Balfoura is rather shy about taking part in dramatization...is a well-behaved girl, both in the classroom and on the playground...excellent work in reading and phonetics. "Then prizes and commendations in years to follow, a prefect in my senior year, but no honors in gym or sports" I was a puny, sickly geek!

In my old scrapbook, I have the ticket stub for my 1947 trip on the General B. Gordon ocean liner, bringing me to the United States. Attached to the ticket is the Shanghai Quarantine Service certificate showing I received the necessary vaccinations to board the ship. Framed on my wall is a most precious, 15" x 18" (real sheepskin, y'all), 1950 University of Georgia diploma. Artium in Journalismo Baccalaurei, dated X June Annoque Domini MCML. A proud milestone...

And there are more: the 1953 invitation

to my wedding to Hans R. Mayer, in Savannah - I became an American citizen later that year, a major milestone; our first child, Sandra Mayer, born in 1954 in Eastman, the first grandchild for my parents, Frieda and Jacob Friend, and a huge milestone for all of us. Most checks I've shredded, but one that I've saved, for \$50, is dated March 26, 1956. It is made out to Bernard Jacobson, the mohel who drove in from Savannah to perform the bris for our son, Ronnie Mayer, at our new home in Hawkinsville. My husband, Hans, taught me how to make German potato salad, to serve with the luncheon for our family and guests that day. Our family doctor, who delivered Ronnie, was invited to the bris, and he later told me that he was quite impressed, witnessing this ritual for the first time. I also found a 1962 bulletin from the Fitzgerald Hebrew Congregation, where our small-town Middle Georgia Jewish families worshipped and socialized. Noted in the bulletin: "A Mazel Tov to Mr. & Mrs. Hans Mayer of Hawkinsville, on the birth of daughter Laurie Kay." My youngest, Laurie Mayer Coffey, is now 47 and mother of 11-year-old Tom.

In front of me is a yellowed copy of The Jerusalem Post, September 18, 1978. The banner headline screams out, "Pact for Peace at Camp David." My daughter Sandy and I are on board El Al, winging our way to our odyssey in Israel. Besides meeting my paternal cousins for the first time, I recall holding my breath at my first sight of the Western Wall (which I always think of as the Wailing Wall) and then touching the actual stones, where thousands of years ago one of our ancestors may have stood as well. If this trip wasn't a mind-shattering milestone, I don't know what else it could be. Another biggie, in November 1992, was my trip to Russia with the Friendship Force and the first time meeting my mother's family. Hugs, kisses, and tears of joy in celebrating that milestone.

And then there was the summer of 1996, when Atlanta hosted the Summer Olympics. I am stroking the beautiful silk scarf, part of my dress uniform as envoy to the Republic of Moldova (formerly the Moldavian SSR) team in the Paralympic Games, which followed the Olympic Games. I gulped down tears as I arched with the Moldovan standard bearer and the nine-member team in both the opening and closing ceremonies - another milestone.

During the decades of my adult life, there have also been sad milestones. I have obituaries of my parents, my husbands, and some dear friends, as time winged its way through the years. Then many more joyous milestones: the children's marriages; my presence in 1984 at the birth of my first grandchild, Erica (who is now in law school; how time flies), followed in four years by the awesome and unforgettable experience of actually watching the birthing of her younger brother, Scott. He is now in his second year at UGA. Wow!

I'm not claiming originality in reciting personal milestones. I am, however, genuinely amazed to find all these old cards, photos, and documents of those interesting and life-altering times and events in my life. One thing I've noticed: Throughout the 1950s and '60s, I was referred to as Mrs. Hans Mayer (I signed the check to the mohel that way, too), as though I were only a half-part of my husband. I guess most married women were so addressed then. We are now taught to have our own credit cards and bank accounts. I'm not a rabid feminist, but I think it's about time we have our own personal identities. And that, too, is a huge milestone. Each birthday is a milestone of sorts, and I have passed 84 such markers in my lifetime. Which interesting celebrations are yet to come? I'm ready - bring them on!

THE JEWISH GEORGIAN July-August 2009

Israel and the World Powers

By Jonathan Goldstein, University of West Georgia/Harvard University Fairbank Center

London: I. B. Tauris, 2011]

Japan and Israel: From Erratic Contact to Recognition to Boycott to Normalization

The relations between Japan, the Jews, the founders of the modern state of Israel, and the state itself after its proclamation on May 14, 1948 have occurred in four distinct phases: Beginning in the early twentieth century and continuing until the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Japan on May 15, 1952, relations consisted of a potpourri of often contradictory actions: mutual assistance at times of need, especially American Jewish banker Jacob Schiff's substantial aid to Japan during the Russo-Japanese War and Japan's endorsement of Zionism and the principles of the Balfour Declaration, which called for a national homeland for the Jews in the then-Ottoman province of Palestine; Japan's discovery as early as the 1930s of a vast potential for trade with the Arab and Islamic worlds, a sentiment which could not be easily reconciled with equal treatment for the yishuv, the much smaller Jewish community of Palestine and later of Israel; the appearance in Japan of philo-Semitic as well as anti-Semitic literature, of defenders as well as detractors of the Jews; and Japan's alliance with Hitler and, at the same time, a concerted Japanese effort at saving European Jewish lives and evacuating and resettling European Jews in Japanese-held regions of China, especially in Shanghai.

A second phase began with the establishment of Japanese-Israeli diplomatic relations on May 15, 1952 and lasted through 1985. Both

countries were anxious to secure international recognition. Israel was the first country in the Middle East with which Japan established relations after the war. Nevertheless, because of the far greater trade potential of the Arab world, Japan's relations with Israel plummeted into a downward spiral. Japan cooperated extensively with the Arab economic boycott of Israel. Japanese anti-Zionism intensified from both the right and the left, finding its fullest expression in a 1972 Japanese Red Army terrorist attack against a group of Christian pilgrims at Tel Aviv Airport. Diplomatic relations were nearly severed as a consequence of the 1973 Arab oil embargo, but American intervention saved the day. In 1975 Japan abstained on a 1975 United Nations vote equating Zionism with racism. In 1979, after the Khomeini revolution in Iran, Japan maintained its Persian ties despite that nation's hostility to both Israel and the United States.

From 1985 to 1991, the United States, Israel, and private American-Jewish groups intensified their appeals to Japan to lessen its cooperation with the Arab economic boycott. Japan ultimately discovered, as did China and India, that normal economic relations with Israel did not preclude good relations with oil-rich Arab and Islamic states.

Between 1991 and 2011, cultural ties between the two countries flourished, the economic boycott was finally terminated, Israel provided

substantial and well-publicized disaster relief to Japan during its 2011 tsunami and earthquake, and Japan increased its involvement in Arab-Israeli peacemaking, especially within the framework of United Nations activities. In 2012 both countries will celebrate the 60th anniversary of their diplomatic relationship. Japanese-Israeli relations continue to be tested by a resurgence of Arab boycott and Palestinian statehood demands and ongoing Iranian warfare against Israel.

Erratic Relations between Japan and the Jews up through May 14, 1952

The first significant interaction between Japanese and Jews occurred in 1904. Jacob Schiff, the American Jewish banker who was president of Kuhn Loeb and Company, helped underwrite \$196,250,000 in major loans which ensured a Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War. In an unusual honor for a foreigner, the Emperor Meiji hosted a luncheon for Schiff where Schiff was presented with one of Japan's highest decorations, the Order of the Rising Sun, Second Grade. According to Japanese Financial Commissioner Takahashi Korekiyo who negotiated these loans, Schiff saw lending money to Japan as more than just an entrée into a potentially lucrative foreign market; he wanted Japan to help the Jews by punishing the Russian government. Takahashi explained Schiff's rationale:

He had a grudge against Russia on

account of his race. He was justly indignant at the unfair treatment of the Jewish population by the Russian Government, which had culminated in notorious persecutions. He harboured no ill-will toward the Russian people; but he thought the Imperial regime of Russia was utterly antiquated. A system of government which was capable of such cruelties and outrages at home as well as in foreign relations must be overhauled from the foundation in the interest of the oppressed race, the Russian peoples themselves, and the world at large. For this purpose, it was desirable to admonish the ruling class of Russia with an object lesson. Schiff saw in the war callously embarked on by the Russian government an opportunity for giving effect to his cherished idea. He felt sure that if defeated, Russia would be led in the path of betterment, whether it be revolution or reformation, and he decided to exercise whatever influence he had for placing the weight of American resources on the side of Japan.

Shortly after World War One Japan participated in international efforts to endorse British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour's 1917 call for a national home for the Jewish people in the then-Ottoman province of Palestine. In 1919 Chinda Sutemi, the Japanese Ambassador to Great Britain, officially notified Zionist Organization executive officer and future Israeli president Chaim Weizmann that the Japanese Government gladly take note of the Zionist aspirations to establish in Palestine a national home for the Jewish people and they look forward with sympathetic interest to the realization of such desire.

In the 1920s and 30s anti-Jewish riots erupted in Palestine, leading to an informal Arab alliance with Hitler. By the 1940s Palestinian Arab leader Al-Haj Amin al-Husayni, the Mufti of Jerusalem, was collaborating with Hitler and broadcasting from Berlin

to the Middle East. As American Japanologist Frank Joseph Shulman has pointed out, Japan's pro-Zionist sentiments began to cool as Japan cultivated far larger trade surpluses with the Arab and Islamic world than she could ever hope to enjoy with the yishuv, the Jewish community in Palestine. Japan also allied with Hitler in the 1936 Anti-Comintern Pact and 1940 Triple Alliance. Simultaneously Japanese officials partook in the rescue of many of Hitler's Jewish victims. In 1937 the Japanese conquered Shanghai, the only place where Jewish refugees from Naziism could travel without a visa. Ultimately, approximately 18,000 Central and Eastern European Jews found refuge there. In a famous episode in 1940, Japanese intelligence officer Sugihara Chiune [1900-86], technically stationed in Kaunas, Lithuania as Consul General, was in a position to issue transit visas. He worked conjointly with Dutch Consuls L. P. J. de Decker in Riga and Jan Zwartendijk in Kaunas to help approximately 2,000 Polish and Lithuanian Jews escape via the Soviet Union to Japan, where they initially settled in Kobe. Those who could not acquire visas for elsewhere were relocated to Japanese-controlled Shanghai. This contingent included the nearly-intact faculty and student body of the Mir Yeshiva, one Eastern Europe's centers for advanced rabbinical study. Thanks to Japanese intervention, these Jews avoided almost certain death at the hands of the Nazis. Sugihara's rescue of Jews was biproduct of his work with Polish Army Lieutenant Leszek Daszkiewicz in observing the movements of German and Soviet forces in the Polish/Lithuanian region. To accomplish his primary task it was essential for Sugihara to have the assistance of non-Jewish Poles, some of whom he also helped escape from Poland and Lithuania. The Jewish exodus must be seen as a fortuitous consequence of, and

perhaps even a cover for, his major military intelligence assignment. Japanese Navy Captain Inuzuka Korishige headed that force's Advisory Bureau on Jewish Affairs from April 1939 to March 1942 and helped Jewish refugees settle in Japanese-occupied Shanghai. So did his Army counterparts Colonel Yasue Norihiro and Major General Higuchi Kiichiro. Looking at those resettlement activities more closely, Hebrew University Japanologist Avraham Altman concludes that Inuzuka, Yasue, and Higuchi were "using the Jews as tools in [their] government's efforts to get the U.S. to remain neutral." Whatever the motivation of those rescuers, all saved Jews at a time when most of the world was closed to Jewish refugees. Hebrew University Japanologist Ben-Ami Shillony notes additionally that Inuzuka, Yasue, and Higuchi [but not Sugihara] combined an "ideological anti-Semitism" with a "friendship" for Jews who might help settle Japanese-occupied parts of China. While being rescuers of Jews these military men were also purveyors of perverse anti-Semitism. Yasue built upon the anti-Semitic stereotypes which Christian missionaries introduced to Japan and which were circulated in Japanese translations of William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. In 1924 Yasue translated the Czarist anti-Semitic forgery *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* into Japanese under the title *Inside the World Revolution*. In 1932, a year before the Nazis came to power in Germany, the Japanese Navy Ministry's Education Department published Inuzuka's tract "The Root of Evil Ideas - For These We Doubt the Jewish Menace." [sic] Japanese Army officer Shioden Nobutaka preached notions about Jews which were indistinguishable from those of the Nazis. With an openly anti-Semitic platform, he polled more votes than any other candidate in elections for the 1942 Diet. Other

anti-Semitic books published before the war included such home-grown screeds as *Anti-Japanese Power of the Jews*, *The Jewish World Menace*, *The Poison of Sassoon in China*, and *International Jewish Control of the Japanese Economy*. These tracts differ from European anti-Semitism in one respect: there were almost no Jews living in Japan. They spread an anti-Semitism against imaginary Jews - a prosecution without a defendant present. The consequence of this bizarre anti-Semitism was, of course, far less invidious than its European counterpart.

Within Japan, Jews also had their defenders. Tokyo University faculty members Yoshino Sakuzo and Yanaiharu Tadao were unapologetic advocates for Jews and Zionism. The late Japanese literature Professor David G. Goodman concluded that these pre-war authors "defended the Jews and Zionism because they recognized the threat posed to the integrity of Japanese intellectual life by anti-Semitic theories and theorists." In 1946, after the war, Otsuki Takeji founded in Nagano the fundamentalist Protestant philo-Semitic Sei Yesu-kai [Holy Jesus Society], also known as the Nihon Kirishichan Isuearu Tomo-no-kai [Japan Christian Friends of Israel]. It contributed money to Israeli universities and established a guest house for Jewish tourists near its Kyoto headquarters. The inn, called "Beit Shalom," became a nick-name for this church. Makuya, a Pentacostal group, sponsored an annual pilgrimage and march through Jerusalem, a Makuya house in Jerusalem, a Makuya forest in the Galilee, and the first Hebrew-Japanese dictionary. The writings of Saul Bellow, Martin Buber, Norman Cohn, Lucy Dawidowicz, Max I. Dimont, Anne Frank, Primo Levi, Amos Oz, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Gerhsom Scholem, Cecil Roth, Philip Roth, H. H. Ben-Sasson, Charles Silberman, Elie Weisel, A. B. Yehoshua, and virtually every

other significant Jewish author were translated into Japanese and enjoyed wide readership. Doshisha Women's University Professor Masanori Miyazawa became an outspoken critic of the long and perverse history of Japanese anti-Semitism.

Viewed as a whole, then, the purveyors of Japanese anti-Semitic and of philo-Semitic literature tended to cancel each other out. Japan's policy towards Israel since 1952, and vice-versa, has been determined more by hard interests of state than by annoying caricatures of Jews or philo-Semitism. What are those hard interests and how have they been pursued?

Diplomatic Recognition, Boycott, Terrorism, and Japanese Ties with Iran, May 15, 1952-1985

From 1952 through the October 1973 Arab-Israeli "Yom Kippur" War, a legacy of anti-Semitism in Japan was discredited, popular attitudes towards the newly-created State of Israel were generally favorable and cultural ties flourished. But political and economic ties deteriorated.

After World War Two, Japan aggressively pursued oil supplies on a worldwide basis to fuel its booming economy. Japan also wished to restore a worldwide market for its exports, for which the United States was its major client. Israel, surrounded by hostile Arab states from the moment of its birth on May 15, 1948, also sought international recognition and economic development. It pursued political and economic ties with Japan, which, by the 1970s, had become the world's second largest economic power in terms of non-military spending.

Japan was precluded from conducting its own foreign relations from the end of World War Two until 1952, when the Allied occupation ended. By that year the Japanese foreign service had been significantly downsized and the Japanese military had been abolished altogether. The Jewish experts from

both services had been dismissed much earlier. The enigmatic Navy Captain Inuzuka reemerges as the founder of the Nihon Isuraeru Kyokai [Japan-Israel Association], which included many right-wingers and ex-military men. Inuzuka was president of that association until his death in 1965. David Ben Gurion's government was able to overcome the reluctance of some of his countrymen to establish relations with a nation which had been one of Hitler's staunchest allies. On May 15, 1952, the fourth birthday of the State of Israel and two weeks after the Allied occupation of Japan ended, both nations, anxious for foreign friends, announced the establishment of diplomatic relations. Israel was the first country in the Middle East with which Japan established relations after the war. According to Shillony, when the first Israeli envoy to Japan, Joseph I. Linton, presented his credentials to Emperor Hirohito in 1952, his letter, signed by Joseph Sprinzak, the acting president of Israel "extolled the historic friendship between Japanese and Jews."

Diplomatic recognition was followed by a downward spiral in relations in which Japan nearly severed its diplomatic ties with Israel. In the fifties and sixties Japanese business with oil-rich Islamic nations grew exponentially. A countervailing force which necessitated maintaining minimal relations with Israel was Japan's wish not to alienate American Jews. Japan cared about American Jewish opinion because of a presumption that Jews wielded extraordinary power in the United States - an influence far greater than the minute percentage of Jews in the American population. This supposition was summed up in the phrase "the road to Washington runs through Jerusalem." American Jews were prominent importers of Japanese automobiles, cameras, and other electronic goods. Other Jews, notably ex-Municher Shaoul

N. Eisenberg, exported to Japan, or were agents for importing into Japan, such critical commodities as iron, steel, and oil. Therefore, while never going to the point of severing relations with Israel to placate the Arabs, Japan leaned over backwards to become, in the words of American Middle East analyst David Makovsky, "the strictest follower" of the Arab economic boycott of Israel.

Virtually all major Japanese companies, including Canon, Casio, Honda, Itoh, Mazda, Matsushita Electric, Mitsui, Nippon Electric, Nippon Steel, Nissan [Datsun], Shiba Electric, Sumitomo, Suzuki, Toshiba, Toyota, and Yamaha Motors Company refused to do business in Israel. El Al Israel Air Lines was repeatedly denied landing rights in Japan even when the company proposed a 50/50 sharing of all profits, at no economic risk whatsoever to Japan. Japan Air Lines refused to serve Israel.

Japanese ships did not dock at Israeli ports. Japanese importers of African iron ore demanded that shipments not be loaded on Israeli freighters or on those that had called at Israeli ports, a stringent form of secondary boycott. According to Tel Aviv University Japanologist Raquel Shaoul, the Japanese trading firms Marubeni-Iida, Sumitomo Shoji Kaisha, and Goshō refused to ship anything on the Israeli-owned Gold Star Line, which serviced Japan.

In 1969 Mr. M. Zaitso, manager of Nissan's export division for Europe and the Middle East, summarized the Japanese case for the boycott. He wrote Tel Aviv automobile dealer Itzhak Arditi, who had expressed an interest in importing Nissan vehicles, that:

We are now exporting around 20,000 units a year to the Arabic countries and have already penetrated the market. According to the boycott resolution by the Israel Boycott Committee, the transaction with your country will surely create a total ban of our export to the Arabic countries.

Judging from the above mentioned, we would unfortunately decline your proposal at this moment.

The Japanese argument becomes problematical when one realizes that Japan was simultaneously preaching a doctrine of free and unrestricted trade in the American marketplace. It would take several decades of American and Israeli appeals before Japan acknowledged that contradiction and gradually began to rescind its boycott of Israel.

Yet another low point in Japanese-Israeli relations was reached in the late 1960s-early 1970s when Japanese leftists, alongside their counterparts in China and elsewhere, came to view Israel as a "running dog of American Imperialism." The fullest expression of this condemnation came on May 30, 1972, when three Japanese Red Army terrorists arrived in Tel Aviv airport and murdered twenty-four passengers in the baggage claim area, including senior Israeli scientist Aharon Katzir. Most of those killed were Christian pilgrims visiting the Holy Land. Two of the terrorists were killed, while a third, Okamoto Kozo, a former Kagoshima University student, was captured and imprisoned until 1985, when he was released as part of a prisoner exchange.

To make matters even worse for Israel, after the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the oil-producing Arab states imposed a partial oil boycott upon Japan until such a time as Tokyo severed all diplomatic ties with Israel. Uemura Kogoro, the president of Keidanren, Japan's powerful business federation, pleaded with Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei to do so. Counter-pressure came from U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who flew to Tokyo in November 1974 specifically to urge Japan not to capitulate to Arab demands. The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish organizations and many other American Jewish groups launched similar appeals. The Tanaka

government's face-saving solution was not to break totally with Israel but rather to call on Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in June 1967. The Arab oil-producing states were at least temporarily pleased and petroleum shipments to Japan resumed, albeit at much higher prices. To additionally befriend the Arabs, Japanese leaders made frequent visits to Arab capitals and voted alongside Arab states in the United Nations. In 1975 Japan was the only major country in the Western camp which abstained, and did not vote against, the U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism. In 1982 a group of lawmakers, academics, and jurists calling themselves, "The International People's Tribunal on the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon" convened in Tokyo and judged Israel guilty of war crimes. In 1985, a public opinion poll conducted by the Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan's largest circulation daily newspaper, found that from a list of thirty countries, Israel was considered the least trustworthy.

Finally, after 1979, Japan's extensive economic ties with Iran strained Japanese-Israeli relations. This was a non-issue before 1979, as the Western-oriented Shah provided 37 percent of Japan's oil and virtually all of Israel's. The Khomeini revolution of 1979 ended all Iranian oil shipments to Israel. Japan continued to receive slightly less than ten percent of its oil from Iran but would not opt out of that market entirely. To keep its Persian option open, Japan invested heavily in Iran, offering generous loans. Japanese firms built Iranian hydroelectric plants and maintained a petrochemical complex at the port of Bandar Khomeini. Israeli appeals to Japan to cease funding a terror-exporting regime received their fullest expression in a December 1994 plea from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Nevertheless Tokyo continued to see even the small percentage of the oil it received from Iran as part

of its strategic reserve. The Jerusalem Post summed up Israel's historic concern about Japanese involvement in Iran in a 1995 editorial, arguing that "every dollar Iran is given frees up another dollar from its domestic coffers for its nefarious projects of subversion overseas."

Battling the Economic Boycott, 1985-1991

Despite a boycott of the Jewish state by most large Japanese firms, others crept quietly into the Israeli market. Sony, Panasonic [National], Toshiba, Mitsubishi Electric, Japan Radio, Kokusai Electric, Nippon Electric, Oki Electric, Sanyo, Sharp, and Yuasa Battery refused to deal with Israel directly. Instead, they traded through dummy companies and 'transshipment,' a process in which boycotters shipped goods to countries like Switzerland where they were repackaged and sent on to Israel. Japanese shipyards built oil tankers for Israeli companies. Israeli-owned Zim Lines and El Yam continued to dock in Japanese ports throughout the period of the boycott. Most important in terms of the value of exports, Israel supplied Japan with one-quarter of its imported polished diamonds. According to historian Shaoul, the reason for this lacuna in the overall boycott was that polished diamonds were less visible than other objects. They were "not seen as potentially jeopardizing Japan's economic interests in Arab markets. No special boycott limitations were applied to this particular product."

In 1969, Fuji Heavy Industries, the eighth largest Japanese auto maker, began to export its Subaru vehicle to Israel. Fuji simply chose not to deal with Arab states. For the following decade this car was the most popular automobile on Israeli roads and Subaru's second largest market, next only to that of the United States. Automotive manufacturers Daihatsu and Suzuki also quietly entered the Israeli market in the early 1980s. Nevertheless the Arab boycott of

Israel remained largely intact as late as 1991. That year the Jerusalem Post lamented that the Honda cars sold here are made, every nut, screw, and bolt, in Maryville, Ohio...This was Honda's way of by-passing possible Arab objections to trading with Israel. Other cracks in the boycott began to emerge simultaneously. Japan became more and more fearful of political and economic retaliation in the United States, where Japan argued persistently for free trade. Abraham Foxman, the Associate Director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, summarized this contradiction in a March 16, 1987 letter to The New York Times. According to Foxman, The Japanese championed free trade in an attempt to forestall United States protectionist legislation. He argued that:

Japan has violated the principle of free trade in its support of the Arab boycott of Israel more openly than any other major industrial nation. Japan thus subverts the system of international trade that benefits all nations and puts at a disadvantage nations like the U.S. that by law refuse to abet the Arab boycott...The Government of Japan refrains from condemning the Arab boycott and is unwilling to do anything to prevent application of the Arab boycott in Japan or to discourage Japanese business cooperation with it.

Because of Japan's double standard, and not an evil Jewish conspiracy alleged by Japanese anti-Semites, there was a real possibility that Japan-bashing circles within the U.S. Congress might unite with America's pro-Israel lobby. One consequence would be retaliatory legislation against Japan in its most valued marketplace. In 1986, to expose and discredit Japan's double standard, the Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Committee, and American Jewish Congress joined forces to establish an American Steering Committee on Freedom of Trade with Israel. This Committee

had a subcommittee on Japan which petitioned Congress to act.

Republican Senators John Danforth of Missouri and Richard Lugar of Indiana and Democratic Representatives Stephen Solarz of New York and Dan Glickman of Kansas raised the boycott issue with Japanese officials at the highest level, as did Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Allen Wallis.

These representations forced the beginning of a substantive dialogue between Israeli and Japanese officials on the highest level. That year Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir paid a state visit to Japan in which bilateral trade was intensively discussed. This was the first time that so senior an Israeli official had been invited to Japan in almost twenty years, since Foreign Minister Abba Eban's visit shortly before the June 1967 Six Day War. In June 1988 Japanese Foreign Minister Uno Sosuke paid a reciprocal state visit to Israel. Uno's was the first visit of any Japanese cabinet member to the Jewish state, and one in which the boycott issue was raised once again. High-level dialogue continued in visits to Japan by Minister-Without-Portfolio Moshe Arens, Communications Minister Amnon Rubinstein, and Abba Eban, in his capacity as chairman of the Knesset's [Parliament's] Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. In November 1987 a delegation from Keidanren, an umbrella body for 800 Japanese economic organizations, met in Israel with counterparts from the Israel Manufacturers Association. Despite these intense high-level discussions, little actual progress was made up to and including a February 1991 meeting in Jerusalem between Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy and Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Owada Hisashi. In March 1991 Israeli Foreign Ministry Assistant Director General for Economic Affairs Ya'acov Cohen, a former ambassador to Tokyo, presented the Japanese Foreign Ministry with a forceful ten

page memorandum ticking off Israeli complaints against the boycott. In the field of finance, Japanese banks did not provide long term credit to those companies who wished to export to Israel. No Japanese banks or their subsidiaries had offices in Israel. During the first Gulf War Japanese banks lumped Israel together with Middle East combatants and withheld letters of credit to companies who wished to do business in Israel. Most seriously, there was neither virtually no Japanese investment in Israel nor any joint ventures. There were no research and development agreements between the two countries. Cohen concluded that "the policy vis-à-vis Israel [taken by] major Japanese economic firms... contradict the principle of free trade." That same year the American Jewish Committee sent two high-level delegations to Japan to appeal for the elimination of the boycott. In April 1991 U.S. President George Bush met in California with Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki, calling on Kaifu to make a "confidence building measure" for peace in the Middle East by ending all Japanese compliance with the boycott.

Over and beyond these representations, other developments in the international arena worked toward the elimination of the boycott. During the 1979-89 Iran-Iraq war Japan's adherence to the boycott did not spare the Japanese petrochemical compound at Bandar Khomeni or even Japanese oil tankers in the Persian [Arab] Gulf from Iraqi air attack. Japan's leaders realized that cooperation with the Arabs hadn't bought them protection. Simultaneously, Arabs and Israelis entered into significant negotiations. On March 26, 1979, Egypt, the largest Arab nation, signed a peace treaty with Israel; Jordan would follow suit some years later. Most importantly, Arab boycott requirements themselves began to weaken. In 1993 Kuwait

declared that it would no longer comply with secondary aspects of the boycott. In September 1994 the Gulf Cooperation Council followed suit. Similar provisions appeared in the November 1994 Casablanca Declaration and the February 1995 Taba Declaration. Japan saw no point in being "more Arab than the Arabs." After Palestinians were allowed to form part of the Jordanian delegation to the 1991 Madrid peace conference, Japan voted with a majority in the United Nations to rescind the 1975 "Zionism equals Racism" resolution on which she had once equivocated.

Normalized Relations, 1991-2011

By 1991 the oil-rich Saudis were preoccupied not with Israel but rather with an Iranian challenge to their domestic rule and international influence. Japan no longer feared Arab retaliation. In 1991 five Japanese-Israeli joint ventures were undertaken. That year Toyota, the largest car manufacturer in Japan, began shipping cars to Israel via a third-country subsidiary. Mitsubishi and Honda began to use Israeli subsidiaries for their sales. Direct trade between the two countries reached \$1.4 billion. This constituted about 0.3 percent of Japan's foreign trade and about 5 per cent of Israel's non-military foreign trade that year. In the fall of 1992 a delegation from Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry visited Israel followed by a May 1993 delegation representing the nine largest Japanese trading companies. Both missions removed any residual trace of the boycott.

By 1994 major Japanese investments in Israel included a \$50 million joint venture between Mekorot, Israel's national water carrier, and Tomen, one of Japan's leading multinational companies specializing in water desalinization. Because of a backlog of orders from Japanese firms caused by years of boycott, in 1995 and 1996 Israel became one of the few

countries in the world to enjoy a favorable balance of payments with Japan. By 1995 bilateral trade rose to \$2 billion. Japan replaced Britain as Israel's second largest non-military trading partner, after the United States. In September 1995 Japanese Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi paid a two-day state visit to Israel as part of an eight-day regional tour which also included Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. Significantly, Murayama's visit was the third of a Japanese Prime Minister to the Middle East and the first to include Israel openly. According to Shillony, as of 2011 "the economic boycott on Israel does not exist anymore...all transactions are now considered on the economic level and there are no political obstacles in these considerations." Kenneth Jacobson, Deputy National Director of Bnai Brith's Anti-Defamation League, writes in July 2011 that "we work on the assumption that Japan stopped boycotting Israel 15 years ago." Mitsubishi, which once was a total boycotter of Israel, has now surpassed Subaru as the commonest passenger vehicle on Israeli highways. The Japanese External Trade Association [JETRO] issued the following summary of Japanese-Israeli trade since 2006:

Israeli imports from Japan:
2006: 1,206 (million US\$)
2007: 1,897
2008: 2,166
2009: 1,145
2010: 1,761
Israeli exports to Japan:
2006: 834
2007: 900
2008: 915
2009: 816
2010: 833

In all five of the above-mentioned years, the balance of trade has shifted heavily in Japan's favor. The main Israeli imports from Japan are transport machinery (mainly automobiles) 62.4%; optical, precision, and medical instruments 1.4%; electronics 2.9%; and

chemical products 5.4%. The main Israeli exports to Japan are electronic instruments and parts 22.1%; optical, precision, and medical instruments 14.4%; chemical products 5.4%; and base metals and derivatives 4.0%. As of 2011 there are 23 Japanese companies operating in Israel. Significantly, since 2005 Japan Air Lines has listed a representative office in Tel Aviv--Open Sky Limited, at 22 Ben Yehuda Street—in its international timetable, although there are still no direct international flights between the two countries.

Since 1991 there has been a continuation of Japanese-Israeli cultural and people-to-people activities which never really stopped and sometimes even blossomed. This collaboration has spread to many areas. The Israel-Japan Friendship Association and Chamber of Commerce was founded in Tel Aviv in 1956. Its Jerusalem section, of which Hebrew University ethnomusicologist Ury Eppstein was chairman, was founded in 1965. While the Tel Aviv center concentrated mainly on commercial activities, the Jerusalem section focused on cultural interchange. Performances of Japanese music, dance, theater, tea ceremony and lectures were held every year on an irregular basis. After a short interval they were resumed in 2009. All of this happened without any subsidy from the Japanese Embassy or the Israeli Foreign Office. For his achievements in the cultural realm the Japanese government awarded Eppstein its Order of the Rising Sun in 1989. It was the same decoration Jacob Schiff received seventy five years earlier.

Since 1958 the Japanese government has been offering scholarships for Israeli students to study in Japan. The first was Eppstein's. In 1990 Shillony's "History of Ancient Modern Japan" was the most popular course at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with 670 students enrolled. That university's Department of East

Asian Studies is the second biggest in its Faculty of Humanities, with approximately one hundred students enrolled in Japanese language classes. In 2000 Shillony received Japan's Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure Gold and Silver Star and in 2010 he was the first Israeli to receive the Japan Foundation Award. Prestigious Japanese awards have also been given to Israeli professors Ehud Harari and Jacob Raz. In terms of reverse activity, in March 2011, in an important humanitarian gesture, Israel sent a medical team to aid displaced persons affected by the earthquake and tsunami which had devastated northeastern Japan. It was the worst natural disaster in Japan since the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake. Israel's emergency aid was widely reported in the Japanese press.

Wars in the Middle East continue to impact Japanese-Israeli relations. As far back as 1967, Japan pledged in the United Nations its "full cooperation" to achieve peace in the Middle East. In 1990 Japan stood solidly behind U.S. President George Bush's efforts in the first Gulf War. In 1995, Japan participated with Israel and many other donor nations in a Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit in Amman, Jordan. On October 15, 1999 Japan hosted an international donors conference in Tokyo to improve economic conditions in areas under control of the Palestinian Authority. That conference also included full Israeli participation and a major address by Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Massalha. In June 2002 Japanese Foreign Minister Kawaguchi Yoriko visited Israel and reiterated her government's support for a two-state solution, and, in this sense, Palestinian state building. Emulating China, the EU, the United Nations, and the United States, Kawaguchi appointed a special envoy responsible for mediating between Israelis and Palestinians. She also reaffirmed her government's

continued support for the unprecedented presence of soldiers from Japan's Self-Defense Forces in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force [UNDOF] in the Golan Heights. They have served in this capacity since 1996.

As of this writing in August 2011, the Japanese government has made no statement on its stance on a proposed Palestinian declaration of statehood at the Fall 2011 meeting of the United Nations General Assembly.

Palestinian sympathizers in the West have renewed calls for an economic boycott of Israel, this time in the form "BDS," an acronym for "boycott, divestment, and sanctions." The Japanese government has so far refused to participate in these activities. Nevertheless, some private Japanese financial and educational institutions may find themselves pressured by BDS advocates and once again on the horns of an Arab-Israeli dilemma. Israel's thirty-two year old conflict with Iran and with Iranian proxies in Syria, Lebanon, and Gaza continue to complicate Japanese-Israeli relations. While pressed by the United States and Israel for more concrete action against Iran, Japan continues to see herself as dependent on Iranian oil.

Conclusion

During the sixty-three years of its existence, Israel has had its ups-and-downs in its relations with many Asian powers. The cases of China and India are described elsewhere in this volume. With respect to China, forty years of non-relations escalated into a honeymoon period of good relations at the height of arms deals in 2000. They have stabilized today. In the case of India, forty years of cautious relations have blossomed into an extensive military and economic partnership.

Unlike China and India, Japan has never enjoyed a honeymoon period with Israel. Instead, as this chapter has shown, Japan and the Jews and Japan and Israel have had a history

of ongoing cultural relations but vacillating political and economic ties. Relations began, positively enough, with Jacob Schiff's financing of Japanese participation in the Russo-Japanese War. The relationship continued with Japan's early support of Zionism; Japanese anti-Semitic polemics and the nation's alliance with Hitler; Japan's rescue nevertheless of many of Hitler's Jewish victims; Japan's recognition, and then economic boycott, of the Jewish State; terrorism; renormalized

trade and political relations; Israeli disaster relief to Japan; and Japan's recent involvement in United Nations peacekeeping activities in the Middle East. In 2012 Israel and Japan will celebrate sixty years of their diplomatic relationship. This event illustrates the balancing act that Japan has gone through, not very much to its credit, and how Israel has struggled to establish its legitimacy in the world, and still does. Things may get a lot harder for Israel once again, unless there is some kind of

unexpected breakthrough with the Palestinians. It is in the interests of both Japan and Israel that Japan intensify its multilateral peace-making activities, and especially its involvement with Iran and the Palestinians, to help resolve the outstanding regional issues which, as shown in this chapter, have exacerbated Japanese-Jewish and Japanese-Israeli relations during the past hundred years.

Beijing's Jewish Day School expanding Sarcham in alliance with ICCP

90

Beijing Ganeinu International School and MAC (Menorah Academy of the Capital) Middle School opened this term the 8th year.

A record breaking number of students are attending, with over 60 children enrolled. This has created an opening for a second nursery and kindergarten to accommodate these numbers for the new school year.

Ganeinu International is the first and only Jewish Day School in

north China. The school combines a devoted staff to quality educational activities and a comfortable exposure to Jewish life, regardless of background or affiliation.

"We have grown from a one class nursery programme into a full day school. We now have classes for children ages one and half years (nursery) through to 12 - 13 years (grade 7)", commented Dini Freundlich, Director, Ganeinu

International School.

The school is located in the Rohr Family Chabad Education Centre, which has state-of-the-art facilities including: seven classrooms, two libraries, a music room, a computer room, and outdoor play area, kosher kitchens for preparing hot meals and under floor heating.

JewishTimesAsia - Issue October 2011

A Shanghai Love Story

Faith Goldman reports that «Schindler's List» producer Branko Lustig is producing a movie about Jewish refugees in Shanghai during the Second World War. With an investment of 30 to 45 million U.S.

Dollars, «The Melanie Violin», a joint work of China and America, will be filmed by the end of this year. The movie, which is an adaptation of a novel written by Chinese American writer He Ning, tells stories about a

Jewish violinist who fled to Shanghai and fell in love a Shanghainese woman.

Points East July 2011

Jewish Moms, Chinese Daughters

By Merri Rosenberg

Reprinted with permission from the Spring 2006 issue of Lilit Magazine. It's just a little hard for me to think of this little China doll taking my mother's name. Your grandmother—this would be hard to explain to her.”—from Daniel Goldfarb's 2004 play “Sarah, Sarah”.

But it's not so hard to explain anymore. During the past decade, plenty of Jewish grandparents have become familiar with the situation explored in this play, in part about the decision of an older, single Jewish woman to adopt a Chinese baby girl. It's much like real life.

Today, “you're shocked when you see an Asian child with an Asian parent,” observes Miriam Hipsh about her former neighborhood on New York's Upper West Side. Hipsh is a 59-year-old writer and the founder of a dating web site for the 50-plus set; she adopted her daughter, WuQing, 11 years ago.

Hipsh's experience and Goldfarb's play reflect the convergence of two trends: Older Jewish women, some of whom have spent decades building up careers, who recognize that they want to experience motherhood, and China's “one child only” social policy, which resulted in the large-scale abandonment of baby girls in orphanages. The resulting phenomenon of single Jewish women adopting Chinese daughters has begun to transform the Jewish community. In preschools, day schools and after-school religious programs around the country, Asian girls are absorbing Jewish traditions through songs, history lessons and prayers, and learning how to pray (daven), which will enable them to take their place on the “bima.” And at the same time, their conscientious Jewish mothers, eager to have their

daughters embrace both their Jewish and Asian heritage, have enrolled them in Chinese language classes, or Chinese dance, art and music programs, to develop their girls' diverse identities.

Consider WuQing Hipsh, now 12, who is a product of Manhattan's Stephen Wise synagogue nursery school and pre-K program, as well as a veteran of the Hebrew school at B'nai Jeshurun in Manhattan. (Like most of the Chinese daughters adopted by Jews, WuQing was formally converted to Judaism as a baby.) Since 2003, Hipsh and WuQing have lived in East Hampton, New York, where WuQing (whose Hebrew name, Devorah Sarah, is in memory of Hipsh's late mother, Dorothy), studies Chinese in her middle school and attends Hebrew school locally. She is preparing for her bat mitzvah next year.

“We're at Adas Yisroel, a very small congregation in Sag Harbor [N.Y.], that feels like a community,” says Hipsh. “They welcome her. She's much loved by the synagogue. It feels wonderful.”

However statistically small this phenomenon of Jewish single mothers with adopted Chinese daughters may be in the greater demographic picture, it has transformed the Jewish communal landscape in ways that weren't even imagined when these founding mothers first ventured to China little more than a decade ago. Scott Rubin, co-author with Gary Tobin and Diane Tobin of *In Every Tongue: The Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Jewish People* (2005) says that “Chinese girls are being adopted by single women in the Jewish community partly because women with higher levels of education are having children

later, and adoption is the avenue they pursue, and Chinese girls are available for adoption. There's an added advantage,” Rubin says. “Chinese girls are viewed as less threatening [than boys, or than children of other backgrounds]. We definitely heard the positive stereotype about Asian girls ... ‘good behavior’ and ‘sweet natures’ as well as being good students.”

Rabbi Cantor (she holds both titles) Angela Warnick Buchdahl, of Westchester Reform Temple in Scarsdale, New York, is the daughter of a Korean mother and an Ashkenazi Jewish father. She was raised in a Jewish household and believes that, “It's different now than when I was a child growing up. It's not as unusual to see children of different races being Jewish.”

Still, she notes, “young children look around and don't see Jewish children who look like them. It's still hard. And on an intellectual level, there's the whole question of ‘what does it mean to be a Jew?’ You're part of a religion, but you're also part of a people, ethnicity or even race. Are we truly an open community, or are we not?”

These questions have begun to intrigue scholars, who are exploring such issues as Jewish identity outside the conventional, Ashkenazic, Eurocentric model. Patricia Lin is project coordinator for the 2003-2007 study of “Asian American Jewish Experience and Identities” at the University of California/Berkeley—and herself a Jew by choice. She says, “There is a struggle within the Jewish community, not just with Asians, to realize the real diversity of the Jewish world.”

Adds Buchdahl, “There should be images of non-white children in our

[Jewish] books, in the movie and video images. There's an Ashkenazic assumption that it's the Jewish cultural norm. The Jewish community of North America is not honest about representing the historical diversity of our community. It's a challenge for us. We come from mixed multitudes, who were dispersed in many communities, [yet] the Jewish European community is the only one that's taught. We've all been strengthened and enlivened and made more rich by all that learning." In their book, Gary and Diane Tobin and Scott Rubin show that American Jews are in fact a multi-racial, diverse community. According to their research, 20 percent of the six million Jews in the United States are non-Caucasian: Asian-American (the adopted Chinese girls are not a statistically significant part of this population), African-American, Latino, Sephardic, Middle Eastern and mixed-race Jews. Conversion, adoption and intermarriage have all contributed to this redefinition of who "looks" Jewish. Gary Tobin points out in a telephone interview that "the make-up of the Jewish people has always been remarkably diverse. Biblical scholars will tell us that we were a collection of tribes. Pay attention to the Torah. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob took spouses from someplace else. Moses and David married black women."

When Lee Miller, a New York-based playwright, decided in 2000 to adopt as a single woman, she recalls "I was originally thinking of going to Russia, which was my family background." Perturbed by the health problems of some adopted Russian babies she had read about who had fetal alcohol syndrome or other problems--and plagued by the idea that someday her child might look at her and think, "My ancestors killed her ancestors," she looked elsewhere. Miller says that she found, in contrast, that the Chinese children came from "regular families" and

were available for adoption either because their parents were too poor to raise them or because of China's only one-child allowing.

Seeing a documentary about orphaned Chinese baby girls, Miller felt that "all these little girls needed help." And so she undertook the journey to find her daughter, Emma Yael, now 10.

Miller, who had her daughter converted at B'nai Jeshurun in Manhattan, where her dip in the mikvah was witnessed by Miller's mother and sister, says, "My Orthodox aunt could not have been happier one more to enter the fold." What may seem relatively simple when bringing a baby or toddler to families with Children from China playgroup takes on other meaning when pre-adolescent girls start to explore their dual identities. Nor is this an entirely uncharted situation the experience of an earlier generation of adopted Korean orphans suggests some ways this scenario may play out.

As Dr. Lin has observed in her study participants from across the U.S., Canada and elsewhere, Asian children who have been doted upon by a community when they are young may have quite different experiences as they grow up. "I've talked to women Korean adoptees who went up to bat mitzvah age in their synagogue, and were shunned once they were in their 20s and 30s. When they leave the community, or are not with their parents, they're seen as Asian. They're not being accepted as Jews in Hillel. They'll walk in with a Caucasian non-Jew, and the non-Jew is thought to be the Jew. The Jewish community is not universally welcoming."

Recently, some young Chinese girls in the Boston-area Jewish community have been invited to partner with Asian college students at Wellesley College, in a kind of big-sister program. "The adoptees feel this is great," says Lin.

Lin underscores the importance of recognizing the centuries-long historical connections between Jews and China to help these families make the connections easier for their daughters. "There were Jews in China a real long time ago," she explains.

Providing a strong Jewish identity, balanced with an equally respectful nod towards their Chinese heritage, is a major priority for the mothers of these Asian-Jewish daughters.

Judi Sherman of Phoenix, a senior vice-president at investment house Smith Barney, has been clear that her Chinese daughter is going to have a bat mitzvah. Her nine-and-a-half-year-old, Annie Gabrielle LiNa (the last part of her given name is Chinese) "is very much into learning about Judaism," says Sherman. "She's never questioned her identity. Out West, the religion seems to be very welcoming. Our rabbi has a sibling who adopted a Chinese daughter."

Integrating the two traditions has so far not given rise to anything that might shake up the Jewish world. Rabbi Judy Spice handler, a rabbi-educator at North Shore Congregation Israel in Glencoe, Illinois, says that when her 14-year-old Chinese-Jewish daughter was younger they would decorate their succah with Chinese images, like a dragon. "I did everything Chinese, Hebrew, English," says Spice handler. "I tried to merge the Chinese theme. My daughter was very comfortable with her Jewish identity."

While issues around bat mitzvah are imminent, concerns about dating are farther away and most of the women interviewed said that they weren't worrying about that for now.

With a bat mitzvah on the horizon, Hipsh says, "At 13, they choose. She could choose not to be Jewish, but it's not an issue. She's a Jewish child in a Jewish family. I don't know what awaits her. I don't know about her identity search; as yet, there's not the need to deny any part of it. I'm not

worried about the dating part. My grandchildren will be Jewish. I made a decision that the more identity I give her, the easier it will be for her." To encourage an identity with her Chinese side, the family is part of a group of other single mothers, some of them Jewish, with Chinese daughters, who frequently get together for Chinese food and other celebrations, Jewish and otherwise. As 11-year-old WuQing sees it, "When you're adopted, you get to choose whether you're Jewish or not. At my bat mitzvah, I'm going to say I'm choosing to be Jewish." What she enjoys about her dual heritage is that "You get to celebrate more holidays-like Chinese New Year's, normal New Year's and Jewish New Year's." Most of these girls are still too young to have had a bat mitzvah. Others are still in the planning stages, with not much thought given to details, except perhaps for including Chinese food in the party menu.

One teenager, who did not want her name used for this article, is at a point where she wants simply to be "another white Jewish girl" and not have to deal with the dual identity she confronts in the larger world. Almost all adoptees wrestle with issues of dual identities, but for children adopted out of orphanages there can also be a residual "survivor's guilt" about those left behind.

For her traditional bat mitzvah, this girl's dvar Torah concerned the "Mishpatim" portion, which includes the passage about "not wronging a stranger" or the widows and orphans in the community. She directly addressed the larger social issue of why there are so many adoptees from China, and urged her listeners to take positive action to help these children. She said, "These children are like the widows and orphans of the Torah. They are very vulnerable and they need our help. Ignoring them is just as bad as oppressing or wronging them. Some of the children are lucky, and find wonderful homes

in other countries with families that adopt them and love them. But we have to help the ones who never have the chance. That is why I will be donating part of my bat mitzvah presents to help children in the orphanages, especially in the Wuhan Foundling Hospital, which is the orphanage that found me my family ... Everyone can actively do something to help others, like donate money or clothing or food or time to help people who are less fortunate. If everybody did that, soon there would no longer be any strangers; the whole world would all be one "mishpacha" (one family).

Despite this heartfelt melding of Chinese and Jewish experience, reactions to giving these Chinese girls a Jewish identity are still not always predictable.

"I got a lot of grief for sending her to a Jewish day school from the general Chinese adoption community," says Joan Story, a clinical social worker in Manhattan with a 7-year-old daughter, Alexa. "They felt she wouldn't be around a lot of other Asians. She would have been in a New York private school anyway, with only a few Asian children in each class. There are some adopted Asian children in her school, just not in her class."

When Story attempted to introduce Alexa to a Chinese dance class, Alexa refused to go back. As Story concedes, "She's very identified with the Jewish community. She told me that 'We can't leave this building. It's special, because this building celebrates Christmas and Hanukkah. Other buildings are just Christian.'" Single mothers aren't the only ones to struggle with these issues.

Randi Rosenkrantz, 55, of Houston, Texas, and her husband, 52, made sure that both of their adopted Chinese daughters--10-year-old Jill and 6-year-old Kate--had Jewish baby naming ceremonies as well as immersion in the mikvah. "I wanted my children to be well-grounded,

and in a Caucasian family where they do not look like us, I need and wanted to find a way. So I decided that through our religion they would hopefully feel more of a connection," she explains in an e-mail message. "They will both have a bat mitzvah." Rosenkrantz is making an effort to ensure that her daughters are linked to their Chinese heritage as well. "We stay connected to other families who have adopted from China," she says. "We have Asian influences in our home, especially artwork. I have a book collection myself that the kids will share as they get older, that have to do with China and/or Chinese adoption. I bought books for the kids on China that were age appropriate. We celebrate Chinese New Year."

With her husband, Lisa Gibbs is raising two daughters, 10 and 5, both adopted from China. Uncomfortable with the egalitarian Conservative synagogue they initially belonged to in Brooklyn, Gibbs--who attended yeshiva until eighth grade--switched her daughters to a Jewish cultural program. Gibbs reports in an e-mail, "While I am somewhat sad that [her daughter Basya] will have a less traditional Jewish upbringing, I like the program there far more in terms of Jewish ethics, and I notice that they are doing far more in the area of Jewish identity ... She has even decided that she likes learning Yiddish--and this is after refusing to learn Chinese, and hating Hebrew at Hebrew school and Spanish in public school! Somehow this school has made learning Yiddish a positive to her!"

Gibbs adds, "I want them to feel REALLY Jewish and REALLY Chinese, not some watered-down version." Her 5-year-old, Mira, takes Chinese dance class and watches Chinese language and song tapes.

For other parents whose adopted Chinese daughters are still quite young, there is an almost touching faith that by the time their girls are older there will be no doubt about

their place in the Jewish community. Debbie Halperin, living in Suffern, New York, has a 3-year-old daughter from China, and an 11-year-old daughter from her first marriage. "The little one goes to synagogue for nursery school," she says. "Laci loves being Jewish. She loves Hanukkah; she knows the prayers for Shabbat. She's a Jewish girl through and through. She's part of the Jewish family. She'll have a bat mitzvah and be married under a huppah." Halperin, 42, is a founding member of a Jewish/Asian adoption group that recently celebrated its third Hanukkah party.

Ultimately, of course, little matters other than the bonds that have formed between mother and daughter.

"She's been enriched by the Jewish element, and I've been enriched by the Chinese element," notes Hipsh. "It's all good."

Having Jewish family origins in Eastern Europe. Of the culture of Jews with family origins in Eastern Europe. In modern Jewish practice, Jewish girls come of age at 12 or 13. When a girl comes of age, she is officially a Bat Mitzvah (\daughter

of the commandments\'). The term is commonly used as a short-hand for the Bat Mitzvah\'s coming-of-age ceremony and/or celebration. The male equivalent is "Bar Mitzvah." The raised platform in front of the sanctuary which holds the ark in which the Torah is kept. The person who leads a Jewish congregation in chanting and singing prayer. ("Hazzan" in Hebrew.) People who attend and worship at a given synagogue. The language of Judaism. Used in prayer in most synagogues and the official language of the state of Israel. Also refers to Jews, especially before they entered Israel and were given the Torah, as in "the ancient Hebrews." A huppah often spelled? chuppah? is a Jewish wedding canopy with four open sides. A Jewish wedding ceremony typically occurs under a huppah. Ritual bath. Spiritual leader and teacher. Typically, but not always, leads a congregation. Of the culture of Jews with family origins in Spain, Portugal or North Africa. The Jewish Sabbath, from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. The hut in which Jews dwell and/or eat during the

holiday of Sukkot. Place of Jewish worship, referring to both the room where it occurs and the building where it occurs. Colloquially referred to as "temple." Place of Jewish worship. Same as synagogue. The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, or the scroll that contains them. Language once widely spoken by Jews in Eastern Europe, it\'s a hybrid of German and Hebrew. No longer commonly spoken, although many Yiddish words, such as "shtick," are part of common parlance. Hanukkah is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd Century BCE. It is marked by the lighting of a menorah. Praying, in Yiddish. A word of Torah a lesson or sermon based on the weekly reading of the Hebrew bible in synagogue. Merri Rosenberg is a freelance writer based in Westchester County, N.Y., and was a regular contributor to Education Update, Lilith, Jewish Week and Westchester magazine.

**Sino-Judaic Institute - Points East -
July 2011**

ISRAEL RAISES US\$400M FROM ASIAN GOVERNMENT FUND

According to Globes newswires, the government of Israel announced that the Accountant General's Office implemented a US\$400 million, one-year, private offering to one of the world's largest Asian government funds.

The offering was made as part of the Israeli government's European Medium Term Note shelf prospectus plan. Goldman Sachs, which is currently serving as the head market maker for Israel government bonds, was the underwriter.

"The current offering was

implemented at the request of the Asian investor, who is considered a strategic global investor in capital markets. This will be its first investment in Israeli government bonds," the Ministry of Finance's announcement said.

China's sovereign investment fund, CIC, and Singapore's sovereign investment fund, Temasek, are among Asia's leading government funds.

The fundraising was implemented at a one-year dollar interest rate of 1.599%. In shekel terms, this is very low for fund raising costs.

The government's financing cost in shekels is lower than the short term securities' yield for the same period by about 0.3%.

Minister of Finance Yuval Steinitz said, "The ministry of finance views the penetration of new markets as extremely important, and in particular the Asian market that is developing so quickly. Israel's exposure to Asian financial markets opens the door for Israeli companies interested in conducting commercial activity with Asian countries."

Jewish Times Asia - September 2011

Sinic & Semitic Esoterica: Exploring the Bridge between Daoism and Kabbalah

By Cody Bahir

Though certain affinities and similarities between both the cultures of the Chinese and Jewish peoples have been documented, only recently have there been serious studies conducted that compare their religious and philosophical traditions. One such area that contains unexplored parallels between the spiritual traditions of Judaism and those of China are the forms of mysticism each produced. This article takes a critical look at the similarities as well as differences between Jewish and Chinese mysticism as embodied in the two traditions of Kabbalah and Daoism. Jewish mysticism is most prominently represented by Kabbalah, a title that literally means 'that which is received' referring to the belief that it consists of an esoteric doctrine received during the revelation at Sinai as depicted in the Hebrew Bible. Though there have been numerous strains of Jewish mysticism throughout time, Kabbalah, since it gained popularity in the middle ages, has remained the dominant school. Kabbalah became the dominant form of Jewish mysticism after the propagation of the Sefer haZohar, literally 'The Book of Radiance', most often referred to simply as 'The Zohar'.

China has produced its own varying forms of mysticism, from ancient shamanic practices to certain schools of esoteric Buddhism. The particular form of Chinese mysticism that this study compares is that of Daoism, arguably the most popular and dominant form of Chinese mysticism as well as the only indigenous form of organized mysticism in China. The

belief in a supreme, eternal, ineffable and incomprehensible force that is the source of all existence referred to as the Dao is where Daoism gets its name.

Before proceeding, a disclaimer of sorts is in order. Daoism as a religion is extremely diverse, has never been monolithic and has never had a central authority that laid claim to what Daoism truly is. The Daozang, Daoist canon, is composed of over 1400 volumes, many with entirely different teachings, methods of personal cultivation and religious motifs. Kabbalah is quite similar in this regard. Ever since Kabbalah became a literary genre, (i.e. it began to be written down rather than simply passed along orally), it has been extremely multivocal. In order to both respect and embrace the shared diversity of these traditions, this article focuses on the most common and widely accepted themes within each.

Another point concerning this study must be stated. The goal of this article is not to uncover some universal truth that both the Kabbalists and the Daoists deciphered through intellectual or intuitive investigation. Nor do I propose that there was some form of communication or influence between the adherents of these traditions. Rather, the purpose of this study is to explore the many striking similarities between each of these traditions as they exist in their own context. This is done in the hope of stimulating further investigation into the mystical traditions of the Jewish and Chinese peoples in order to find firmer common ground and understanding between two separate,

yet connected cultures and traditions.

Part 1: The Divine

It should not be surprising that Kabbalah, being a tradition within the monotheistic religion of Judaism, views the God of the Hebrew Bible as the source of all life and truly the entire universe. What was revolutionary about Kabbalah when it was first promulgated during the Middle Ages was how definitively it portrayed the God of the Hebrew Bible. The transcendent God, which was believed to be above all description and portrayal, is analyzed, categorized and even 'graphed out' in Kabbalah. This graph is structured according to what is often referred to as the Tree of Life. The Tree of Life is most usually composed of ten sefirot, 'spheres' or more correctly 'levels' or 'aspects'. These sefirot were originally portrayed in the Zohar as being the ten dimensions of God's inner essence. Thus, Kabbalah became very close to employing a definitive, divine pantheon in order to explain the very nature of divinity. Overtime, however, a debate among Kabbalists arose over whether the ten sefirot were 'pieces' of God himself, or merely vessels that held his divine essence. Due to the theological problems the former idea presented the monotheistic religion of Judaism, the consensus of the tradition for the past few hundred years has been the latter.

Daoism viewed the source of life as the Dao, which originally translates as 'path' or 'way'. The Dao, much like the God of the Hebrew Bible, is believed to be above all description or conception; absolutely eternal

and ineffable. The most foundational Daoist scripture, the Daodejing, (Tao Te Ching) opens with the line, “The Dao that can be spoken of is not the true Dao. The name that can be named is not the true name.”

Unlike the God of the Hebrew Bible, however, the Dao itself is never personified, it never gets angry, jealous, sad, or happy nor does it issue commandments or dish out punishment. But like Kabbalah, later Daoists incorporated an extremely extensive pantheon in order to explain how the Dao is made manifest in phenomenal reality. Nevertheless, it would be just as much of a misnomer to categorize Daoism as polytheistic as it would to say the same about Kabbalah, which was the subject of such accusations in its earliest heyday by a number of rabbinic figures. Such accusations were one of the root causes of what led Kabbalah to eventually curb its doctrine of the sefirot as mentioned above. Rather than believing that these various gods are actual divine beings in their own right, they are viewed as being manifestations of the Dao just as every aspect of the universe is.

Thus, both Kabbalah and Daoism are founded on the view that the divine, either God or the Dao, is absolutely eternal, inexplicable and incomprehensible. Perhaps due to the fact that such divinity is quite difficult to relate to, both traditions produced more comprehensible forms to depict the divine in a way that would make it possible for religionists to interact with.

Part 2: The Universe

The cosmological paradigms, (‘maps’ of the universe) as well as the metaphysics by which the universe is believed to be governed are very similar in these two traditions. The cosmologies of Kabbalah and Daoism are both built upon an almost identical foundational cornerstone; a dualistic view of the universe based on the binary gender paradigm. In

simple terms, all aspects of existence were believed to be of a either female or male nature, negative or positive, dark or light, etc. The ‘stuff’ of which the universe is made was believed to have either one of these two qualities or more commonly, a mixture of them. Because of this, both traditions perceive everything that exists as an extension of their respective cosmological structures and to be connected through an invisible web of sorts, giving everything a sympathetic relationship to everything else. This is one aspect of these two traditions that has been somewhat embellished, though understandably so, by modern, eclectic religious movements and pop-culture spirituality.

The dualistic, gender enriched symbology of Chinese cosmology is often referred to as the Yin Yang theory. In a nutshell, it is the belief that all that exists in the perceivable universe is both created by and is composed of an amalgamation of the forces of yin and yang. Yin represents the female aspects of reality and is associated with earth and darkness. Yang represents the male aspects and is associated with heaven and light. The belief that the world was created by an interaction between the female force of Yin and the male force of Yang is rooted in ancient Chinese mythology, which attributed the creation of the world to a divine coupling between a supreme father and mother goddess. The terms Yin and Yang respectively originally referred to the shady and sunny sides of a hill. This is at the heart of the well-known circular symbol of the taiji, usually simply referred to as a “Yin Yang”, which has one black and one white half. The martial art of Taiji Chuan, (Tai Chi Chuan), was given its name because its circular foot and hand movements resemble this symbol. The roots of this cosmological structure are most dramatically embodied in the book of the Yijing (I-Ching) the

ancient Chinese divinatory system and philosophical text. The title, Yijing translates as ‘The Scripture of Change’ and is evocative of the book’s divinatory qualities; for one who is able to discern and interpret the signs of the Yijing correctly is believed to be able to predict the changes in the timeline and thus predict the future. Though the contents of the Yijing serve as a source of inspiration for much of Daoism, it is not actually a Daoist work as it predates any organized religious or philosophical tradition in China.

Kabbalah, much like Chinese cosmology, is entirely dualistic. It views all of reality including all levels of God’s own being, the Tree of Life and all ten sefirot except for the highest, as being an extension of either male or female. As already stated, the Tree of Life, the cosmological structure which all Kabbalah is based upon was originally believed to be God; they were the ten aspects of God’s very own being as well as his anthropomorphic body. Since the entire world is both a representation and extension of God, Kabbalah looks to the structure of the Tree of Life to discern the inherent, hidden nature of existence. Much like Yin and Yang, the Tree of Life is divided into male and female aspects. This is the foundation of the Kabbalistic version of creation, which is believed to be an ongoing process, which occurred by the coupling of God’s male and female aspects. Thus, both Kabbalah and Daoism see creation and existence as the ongoing process of the divine having sexual intercourse with itself.

What exactly the universe is made of, the building blocks of creation, the primordial substance even more foundational than atoms or their subatomic components are explained in both Kabbalah and Daoism. Kabbalah referred to this substance as shefa meaning ‘outpouring’ and usually translated as emanation. This shefa is the productive substance

that is subsequent to the divine coupling between God's male and female aspects and is the source of all creation.

In Daoism, the world is believed to be composed of qi (Chi), usually translated as 'energy' but also means 'breath' and 'steam'. Qi is believed to be the substance that emanates from the root of all life and the universe, the Dao.

Both Chinese and Kabbalistic cosmology thus view the universe as being both the product and continuation of a form of supernatural, sexual intercourse. Though such a similarity between two entirely independent and separate cosmologies is so striking, their differences are equally interesting.

In the Yin Yang theory, both the female and male aspects are considered equal; separate and different, yet equal. They are not viewed as contradictory forces, which need to be appeased through compromise, but harmonized through balance. Though Yang is considered to be dominant and Yin to be submissive, this view is not one of value but one of function, much like the positive and negative poles of a battery.

Kabbalistic dualism, on the other hand, always depicts the female as an afterthought or accident. Much like the version of the second creation story in Genesis in which Adam, the male, is first created alone and then Eve, the feminine, is created as an afterthought as well as an offshoot of the masculine.

Part 3: Humanity

Another striking similarity between Daoism and Kabbalah is how each tradition views the composition of humanity.

In Kabbalah, the human soul is most often divided into three parts, nefesh, ruah and neshamah. The nefesh is considered to be the lowliest of souls, one that animates the body and gives it life. Animals are also believed to have a nefesh. The ruah a word that translates as 'wind' or 'spirit' is

considered the root of the intellect. The neshamah is portrayed as being akin to a piece of God's own divine being. Thus, the Kabbalists imagine a human as existing primarily of three levels of existence, physical, mental and spiritual.

In much of Daoist literature, there is a similar soulful trinity, the po, hun and shen. The po is much like the nefesh that gives life to the body. The hun is quite similar to the ruah as it is considered the root of all mental activity, though this similarity is not entirely parallel or universal within Daoism. Echoing ancient Chinese beliefs that gave rise to the practices associated with ancestor veneration, the po is believed to reside in the underworld after an individual's death. The hun, if the individual is worthy, is believed to ascend to a heavenly realm. Many rituals associated with ancestor veneration and even practices that are included in the Chinese art of Feng Shui, literally 'Wind and Water', are intended to appease the restless spirits of departed family members.

The shen is much like the neshamah in the sense that it was considered to be eternal and the part of the individual that gets admitted to an afterlife paradise. In certain forms of Daoist internal alchemical practices, the aims of which are explained later in this article, the shen is portrayed as the most purified form of qi that an individual harnesses to construct a spiritual body of sorts to house his or her hun in the afterlife.

Though these categorical designations are not universal, as both Kabbalah and Daoism are quite diverse and break up the constitution of humanity differently, these are their most common and better-known views of humanity's composition.

The core similarity between the goals of Daoist cultivation and Kabbalistic practice are rooted in the belief in the macrocosmic/microcosmic respective relationship between the universe and humanity. In simple

terms both God and the Dao which, though quite different, are considered to be the source of the universe as well as its totality and are seen as the macrocosm, human beings, on the other hand, are viewed as the microcosm, meaning that a human being is believed to be much like a smaller, distilled version of the entire universe; much like a small reproduction, photocopy or print of a larger, original piece of artwork.

In Kabbalah, the passage from Genesis that states that "God created man in his own image" is taken quite literally. The human body itself is seen as a representation of God as it is depicted as being constructed according to the structure of the ten sefirot. So in essence, the universe is constructed according to the ten sefirot as is humanity.

In Daoism we find another striking parallel. The human body is shown to be inhabited by and a manifestation of the primary gods of the universe. Each of the five organs of classical Chinese physiology is believed to be inhabited by one of these five gods. These 'bodily gods' play a large role in Daoist internal alchemical practices.

Thus, in both Daoism and Kabbalah, not only are the various aspects of human soul believed to contain a piece of the divine, but even the human body is depicted as being a representation and embodiment of the whole of the divine as well as the entire universe.

Part 3: Goal

Because of this relationship between each human individual and the entire cosmos, both Daoism and Kabbalah place most of their emphasis upon the personal, inner spiritual life of the individual rather than stressing external works. This is not to say that neither Daoism nor Kabbalah are very much concerned with the fate and well being of the world and all of its inhabitants, quite the contrary. Rather, since each human being is believed to have a direct relationship

with every aspect of the created universe, if an individual focuses on elevating his or her spiritual state, they inevitably bring redemption to the entire universe. For the Kabbalist, this process is referred to as *tikkun*, meaning ‘fixing’ or ‘repairing’. As the world is believed to be in a fallen state caused by Adam and Eve’s eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, the entire universe is constantly in need of spiritual repair; an idea similar, but not identical to, the Christian notion of “Original Sin”. Though usually the *tikkun* that the Kabbalist is intent on enacting is a personal *tikkun*, it has cosmic ramifications due to the relationship between the micro and macro.

Though not present in the Zohar, the doctrine of *Shevirat haKelim* “The Shattering of the Vessels” taught by the sixteenth-century Kabbalist Isaac Luria, further developed the Kabbalistic notion of *tikkun*. As Lurianic Kabbalah represents a later phase in the development of Kabbalah, it did not view the *sefirot* as God Himself but as vessels that contain His divine essence. When God created the universe, he utilized the *sefirot* and the channels which connect them as a ‘pipeline’ of sorts to direct *shefa* down from His undifferentiated divine being into phenomenal reality in order to plant the seeds of creation. As lofty and magnificent as the *sefirot* were, they were not able to adequately contain the flow of *shefa* and “shattered”, dispersing “sparks” of divinity throughout the entire universe. The goal of *tikkun* in the eyes of Luria was to repair the *sefirot* by uplifting these sparks through *mitzvot*.

Daoism, on the other hand, does not see the world as fallen. Things simply are as they are. The different levels of existence, whether positive or negative, are based on how pure and unadulterated they are; i.e. how close to communion with the ineffable *Dao*. In Daoism, there is a sense of reward and punishment,

though these are sometimes depicted as being divvied out by various deities, are in essence viewed as more the inevitable consequences of either adherence to or transgression of universal principles and laws. Rather than seeing the opposite poles of existence as being in opposition, they are viewed as complimentary. Unlike Kabbalah, where there is a definite aim of subjugating the negative to the positive, Daoism sees no struggle to be won, rather a balance to be stricken.

Part 4: Life and Death

The very definition of what ‘goodness’ truly entails at its root is the same in both Daoism and Kabbalah: life. At face value, this fact may appear deceptively simple, for of course life is good. This fact is true for most philosophies and religions save for forms of nihilism as well as certain strains of Buddhism and Christianity. But it is not merely that life is good, but goodness is defined by life.

This fact plays out in Kabbalah most poignantly in its cosmology and metaphysics. Being that Kabbalah is wholly dualistic, it should be of no surprise that mirroring the Tree of Life is the Tree of Death, or more correctly, the “Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil”; another motif inspired by the Book of Genesis. Building upon the creation story and the exile of humanity from the Garden of Eden, mirroring the lofty realm of God’s ten *sefirot* is the realm of the demonic and the ten *sefirot* of evil. What truly defines each of these realms or trees are their relationships to life. The Tree of Life is productive, constantly emanating *shefa* and the all life giving force. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil on the other hand, is shown to be entirely sterile and actually parasitic in nature. All perceived struggles between good and evil such as an individual’s personal battle with sinful temptations as well as violence between one person and another are believed to be manifestations of the

continuous cosmic struggle between the Tree of Life and the Tree of Death. Related to the Kabbalistic view of the feminine, the Tree of Life is always portrayed as masculine and the Tree of Death as feminine.

Just as all existent phenomena in the universe are perceived as either belonging to the male or female aspects of the divine realm, they are also viewed as manifestations of either the Tree of Life or the Tree of Death. These two opposing poles are referred to by many names. The side belonging to the Tree of Life is often referred to as ‘the right side’, ‘south’, ‘silver’, ‘the side of holiness’ and of course the masculine. The side belonging to the Tree of Death goes by such terms as ‘the left side’, ‘north’, ‘gold’, ‘the other side’, ‘the side of impurity’ and of course the feminine.

Daoism for the most parts lacks the belief in such a cosmic struggle but its very definition of ‘goodness’ is equally related to life. Being that the *Dao* is viewed as the inexhaustible source of all life, it is logical that life and the forces of life are believed to be positive while the forces that cause death are believed to be negative. This, one may assume, lies at the heart of the Daoist quest for transcendence, often referred to as the quest for immortality. In the west, this quest is often portrayed as one of the defining facets of the religion of Daoism, though modern scholars of Daoism have pointed out that such an emphasis is a mistake. Though there are a number of strands within the diverse religion of Daoism that sought some sort of form of immortality, for the most part, this is not necessarily the most important goal. Rather, communion with the ineffable *Dao* and is the goal. Most Daoist traditions that place a great emphasis on the immortality of the individual, still believe that physical death of the current body is inevitable. Many texts speak of a celestial body; the *shen* mentioned

earlier, that the hun enters after it is 'liberated from the corpse'.

Whether a Daoist seeks a form of physical immortality or spiritual transcendence, such cultivation is based on the belief that life is inherently positive and superior to death.

Part 5: Practice

Kabbalah infuses all existing Jewish ritual and scripture with the belief in the Tree of Life. It views the aims of every Jewish mitzvah, commandment, as being a way to subvert the forces of evil to the forces of good while at the same time facilitating the divine intercourse between male and female aspects. Whether it be washing one's hands before breaking bread or reciting the daily liturgy; each act is believed to bring about the emanation of divine shefa if done correctly. The primary requisite for correct performance of mitzvot is to have the correct kavanah, 'intention'. In reality, these kavanot, 'intentions' are a form of meditation. This form of meditation entails having in mind the influence each particular act has on the Tree of Life. In order to make sure one has the correct intention before performing a commandment, certain incantations are recited, usually stating that one perform the ritual "for the sake of uniting the male and female aspects" of the divine. Thus, every human action, particularly religious acts, is believed to have a cosmic effect upon the entire universe.

Daoist cultivation, for the most part, contains two distinct yet related forms of meditation. One is aimed at achieving a form of union with the universal Dao; a unity that truly always existed, but because of our human limitations we have become unaware of throughout the course of our lives. This is achieved through various forms of meditation where the one who is meditating "sits and forgets" his or her corporeal limitations, banishing all forms of mental discrimination as well as

physical and emotional appetites and cravings.

Though quite distinct from the Kabbalistic goal of uniting the different aspects of the divine, both have a similar aim: unity.

The other primary form of Daoist meditation is often referred to as 'internal alchemy', where one aims to purify and refine the energies of the body in order to enter a higher level of existence. This form of cultivation not only entails meditation, but also prescribed rituals, physical practices sometimes referred to in the west as "Daoist Yoga" and dietary restrictions. The root of these internal alchemical practices highlights a bold difference between Jewish and Daoist mysticism regarding the body. Though the Kabbalists views the human body as being a smaller version of God's own 'body', they embrace a separation between the physical and spiritual aspects of human existence. Often times the body is portrayed as the jail cell in which the loftiest level of the soul, the neshamah is constantly trapped and tormented by its physical appetites. Daoism views the human more holistically, with no true separation between the spirit and the flesh. In much of Daoism, such a separation is absolutely inconceivable, as the body is perceived as the root of both physical and spiritual life. To explain this mindset and its subsequent internal alchemical practices, the noted Daoist scholar Russell Kirkland coined the term 'biospiritual'; a term eloquently expressing the Daoist belief that each cause that has an effect on the physical body of an individual has equal spiritual ramifications and vice versa.

Where Kabbalah is concerned with bringing about an outpouring of shefa from the divine, Daoist biospiritual practices are often concerned with purifying the practitioner's qi and rectifying its circulation through the body. Thus the meditative and ritual practices of both traditions are deeply

rooted in how they understand the construction of the universe.

Conclusion

The core commonalities between the mystical traditions of Daoism and Kabbalah are thus their metaphysics, cosmologies, views of humanity and emphases on achieving a form of cosmic unity. Their differences are primarily rooted in their perceptions of the divine and physical reality.

Both place a great emphasis on the personal, spiritual life of the individual for the individual is perceived to contain every aspect of the universe. This emphasis on the individual was not rooted in any form of selfishness or self-centeredness, for the spiritual cultivation and purification of the individual is believed to have cosmic repercussions. Though I primarily discuss the personal practices of these two traditions, it would be imprudent to neglect the fact that both traditions place a great deal of emphasis on the communal religious experience. The most adept Kabbalist is still obligated to pray three times a day with a minyan, a gathering of at least ten individuals. Communal Daoist rituals aimed at creating sacred space, commemorating life cycle events as well as fluctuations and flow of the earth's qi as perceived in the changing of seasons have always been a core aspect of the religion.

Both traditions are also particularly concerned with their societies, countries and current state of the world. Daoism was often sanctioned as the state religion by many a Chinese emperor who was often coroneted via Daoist ritual performed by Daoist clergy. One key difference between the two traditions in this respect is definitely rooted in the fact that Daoism, until the foundation of the People's Republic of China, was always primarily based and practiced in the land and country in which it originated. Additional to the 'bodily gods' mentioned earlier, Daoism employs other pantheons that are depicted as the governing forces over

time and nature. These external gods are commonly arranged according to a structure that mirrors the classical bureaucratic government. Thus, Daoists saw themselves inherently linked with the bureaucracy and government structure; a structure that was usually the model upon which their pantheon was based. Being that Kabbalists produced their doctrines and ideas while living in Diaspora communities, many a times amidst religious intolerance and political oppression, they did not feel any affinity with the governing class. Being that both traditions are so diverse, this study has hardly crossed the entire expanse of the bridge that lies between Kabbalah and Daoism. Hopefully, however, the issues raised and facts highlighted will help lay the ground for further inquiry into the shared beliefs between these two traditions as well as the spiritual life of the Chinese and Jewish peoples. Points East, Vol 25, #2.

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Points East Vo. 25

Why was this year better than any other year

Previous year's spending Pesach in Asia and finding a Seder was limited to a few locations, mostly in the main cities in some countries

But this year Chabad organized 16 locations around the region including: China, Japan, India, Nepal, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. In addition some new locations were added in Kunming and Taipei. In Hong Kong, Chabad organized three locations, and in China, two in Shanghai and one in Yiwu to add to Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

The mega Seders are also extremely popular for Israeli backpackers and tourists travelling around the region. Around 1500 people attended the Seder organized by the Chabad

centre in Kathmandu and 400 people attended the Seder in Pokhara. The first Nepal Seder took place in 1988, with the others added last year.

In Thailand, the Chabad House in Chiang Mai had approximately 700 guests, despite some recent flooding in the centre.

"Now the sun is coming out and everyone's preparing for Passover," reveals Rabbi Mendy Goldshmid.

For the rabbi and fellow co-director Sara Hinda Goldshmid, preparations meant renting a tent and a refrigerated truck, in addition to lots and lots of

cooking. Meat arrived from Bangkok and China.

The Chiang Mai menu mixed traditional foods like gefilite fish with exotic dishes such as Moroccan salad to make sure everyone felt at home. "I remember two years ago, it started raining in the middle," says Goldshmid. "The people were standing on chairs, even on tables, because there was so much rain."

In the end, it's all about family, he states. Families, students, Israeli backpackers, it doesn't matter: "Everyone is invited to come."

Jewish Times Asia (Issue May 2011)

JEWISH LIFE IN CHINA

OHEL LEAH SYNAGOGUE WELCOMES NEW RABBI

Hong Kong's Ohel Leah Trustees approved the selection committee choice of Rabbi Asher Oser as its new Rabbi.

Rabbi Oser and the Rebbetzin were warmly greeted on arrival in Hong Kong on 12 October 2010, at a special welcome dinner held at the Jewish Community Centre.

Rabbi Oser is a resident of Sydney, Australia. He previously served congregations in the US, in Connecticut and Rhode Island. His last appointment before arriving in Hong Kong was as Rabbi of Beth Shalom synagogue, Providence, Rhode Island where he served since 2007.

Rabbi Oser studied in yeshivot in Israel and was ordained by Yeshiva University in New York. He holds degrees from the University of Sydney and McGill University also. His wife Rachel is a high school science teacher. They have two young sons, Mordechai and Aryeh.

Points East - March 2011

CHABAD CELEBRATES 25 YEARS IN ASIA

Chabad of Asia, formerly known as Lubavitch in The Far East (LIFE), is celebrating its 25th anniversary in the region with a number of events through September 2011. The official celebration began on 28 November

with the dedication of the Roving Torah.

The torah was commissioned by Rabbi Mordechai Avtzon to commemorate his 50th birthday and it evolved into a community event. The torah was finished in the presence of the Hong Kong Jewish community at a lunch at the Community Centre. The Roving Torah then danced with the torahs from Ohel Leah Synagogue and a procession began from there to its new home at the Chabad House. A Chinese marching band escorted participants through the botanical gardens and at Chabad House where the traditional Hakafot took place.

The celebration continued through Chanukah with menorah lightings across the region and a Gala dinner is planned for January. There are other events planned for the US and Israel and the 25th year will culminate in September with a Chinese Auction. However, as Goldie Avtzon noted, "Everything we are doing this year is part of the celebration".

Points East - March 2011

HONG KONG JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL IN MACAU

The 11th Hong Kong Jewish Film Festival (HKJFF) spilled over into Macau for the second year, with the screening of three films at the University of Macau campus.

This year, the KHJFF pushed a China theme, showing the Chinese-made

animated, A Jewish Girl in Shanghai, on 18 November, to an audience of about 600 people, most of them from local schools, both Chinese and international. This was followed by a Q&A session with director Wang Genfa and writer Wu Lin and the largely student audience asked a number of thought-provoking questions. On 22 November, the Festival screened the documentary Shanghai Ghetto, to provide some background historical information to A Jewish Girl in Shanghai

These screenings were organized by Glenn Timmermans, of the Department of English at the University of Macau, in collaboration with Howard Elias and the Board of the KHJFF and the event was sponsored by the University of Macau.

Timmermans said that while Macau does not enjoy a Jewish population anything like that in Hong Kong, there is very real interest in matters Jewish among the local population and his aim is to bring films to Macau on a Jewish theme, especially those about the Holocaust or with other educational value, to raise awareness of Jewish History and values in that city. This screening was the centerpiece for what the organizers hope will be a growing festival in the years to come.

Points East - March 2011

INVITATION

The Board of Directors of Igud Yotzei Sin,
The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel, And the Israel-China Friendship Society

**Are honored to invite you to the traditional Chanukah
Reunion of Former Residents of China and the ceremony for the
presentation of scholarships to students.**

On Tuesday, 27 December 2011

At Mercaz Einav (Gan Ha'ir rooftop) 71 Ibn Gvirol Street, Tel Aviv. Doors will open at 5 PM for start of the reunion. Light refreshments will be served. Doors will close at 6 PM to begin the ceremony.

A historian in search of the Jews of China

If you ask Chan Sui Jeung (aka "SJ") to tell you the story of how the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong came to be, he'll ask you if you have time for the whole story: "it takes about 45 minutes." It will take longer if you ask questions, but the time is well worth it.

How does a nice Hong Kong Chinese boy get involved enough with the Jewish people to be invited to speak at the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv? For SJ, the connection was entirely accidental.

In an old bookshop on New York's Lower East Side SJ stumbled upon a book containing a collection of articles that amazed him; articles on a lost Jewish community in China. As a Chinese historian, SJ could not believe there could be, or ever could have been, Jews in China.

"Of course, then, China was closed! That was the mid-1970's. Nobody could get in." It wasn't until the early 1980's that it became possible to travel in China, and then, only on invitation and as part of a group.

By then, SJ was rising through the ranks of the Hong Kong Civil Service (he retired from Directorate level). As a member of the British Colonial Government, SJ could not find a sponsor. Finally, a company he worked with officially offered to sponsor him and put together a group, and he obtained permission through the then-Chief Secretary Jack Cater.

"They asked me where I wanted to go: Shanghai, Xian... and I told them, I want to go to Kaifeng! And they thought I was crazy - Kaifeng is remote - it was in a part of China that was actually closed at the time. We

had to take the train to Guangzhou - it took six hours - and there was only one hotel there at the time. (And it was a terrible hotel.) And then we flew on an old Russian plane, to Changsha, where we took the train to Zhengzhou. We took a bus, and when the bus came into Kaifeng, it was immediately surrounded by people - they never got buses of tourists in Kaifeng."

It may not come as a total surprise that today Zhengzhou has both a Sofitel and an international airport. But Kaifeng still suffers from annual flooding that has made long frustrated research on its ancient Jewish community. In fact, the Kaifeng synagogue no longer exists, although the street that led to it still does.

"A little while after I was there, a group of US congressmen came to the same place. It's a famous place now."

A chance meeting put SJ in touch with Lord Lawrence Kadoorie. This led in turn to a meeting with Abe Ladar, then Consul General of Venezuela in Hong Kong.

Ladar had written a letter appealing to Jewish communities all over the world for pictures and other artifacts relating to Jews in China for an exhibition called "Jews by the Yellow River" to be held in Tel Aviv in April 1984.

He met SJ, read his manuscript, and invited him to speak on the subject at the Jewish Recreation Club in December 1983. While that lecture was packed, only two people in the audience had ever heard of a Jewish presence in Kaifeng.

In fact, a Jewish presence in Kaifeng

had been documented as far back as the early 17th century. A Kaifeng Jew in Beijing, having heard there were foreigners there who worshipped one God, was directed to Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci, who recognized typically Chinese manners and dress but distinctly non-Chinese features.

It is believed that Jews from Central Asia settled in China as early as 718 AD. Christian missionaries documented much of their history.

One of the best-known books on the community is *The Chinese Jews*, by Catholic bishop W.C. White. This book was published in 1942, at a time when the community in Kaifeng was only in tenuous connection with the outside world. An erroneous claim by another historian that the Chinese Jews were being persecuted came to SJ's attention.

"In fact the truth is exactly opposite as the Han Chinese welcomed the Jews and allowed them to sit for the Civil Service Examination, from which many of them achieved high positions in Government."

SJ's rebuttal was published in New York, and catapulted his scholarship to the forefront on the topic of the Kaifeng community. It was through this series of circumstances that SJ Chan found himself speaking at the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv, in April 1984, on the subject of the Jews by the Yellow River.

"After I had delivered my lecture, I had some extra time in Israel. I was asked if there was anything I wanted to see in Israel, and I asked to visit a kibbutz. I visited Kibbutz Baram, an Italian-speaking kibbutz near

the Syrian border, and Yad Vashem in Jerusalem." Italian is one of the several languages Chan knows fluently.

The research grew into a monograph called *The Jews in China: Reflections on Sino-Judaic History*, which was first published in 1986 and re-printed in a new edition in 2004.

But that's not the end of the story.

"I met other people at the Jewish Recreation Club, including an American called Dennis Leventhal, and the Club Chairman, Mark Ejlenberg. They asked Dennis and I to meet and discuss how to improve the Club. We hit upon the idea of creating a library; starting with the hundred books that the club had at that time."

Today, the Hong Kong Jewish

Community Centre Library has more than 4100 items (including CDs, video and audio tapes, periodicals, newspaper clippings and children's books), including the most complete collection of material on the Kaifeng Jewish community in the world.

Chan and Leventhal next established the Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong. The Society meets regularly to hear lectures and sponsors walking tours of Hong Kong from a Jewish perspective. Its current ongoing project involves cataloguing the graves in the community's cemetery. The cemetery dates back to the early part of the 19th century, and the catalog is slated for publication upon completion.

Not one to sit around idle, SJ is enjoying his retirement and the new

projects it gives him scope for. He is currently working on a book about Hong Kong Chinese guerilla fighters active during World War II in Hong Kong and southern China, and has written recently about his visit to Auschwitz.

"The other thing I really want to do is a very good translation of the stone steles of Kaifeng." The steles - pillars that used to frame the synagogue's entry - are the only remaining written record of the Kaifeng community. "They need to be translated by someone who really has a thorough knowledge of classical Chinese."

More good news for scholars interested in the Kaifeng Jews.

Jewish Times Asia
November 2011

Taipei officially opens a Jewish community centre

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A group of over 200 people were on the streets on 18 September behind a procession of torah scrolls on a bright Sunday afternoon in downtown Taipei.

Jewish and local residents, marched from the Taipei 101 building towards the newlyopened Taipei Jewish Center.

Rabbi Shlomi Tabib, director of the Jewish Center, led the march with singing and dancing. A set of drums, specially brought from Israel, escorted the march on the main streets of Taipei City.

The guest of honour was the donor of the torah scrolls, Avi Netanel, from Israel, who had supported the Taipei Jewish Center from its very beginning. A Torah Dedication Ceremony was also held during the event.

Israel's representative to Taiwan, Simona Halperin, also attended.

Other distinguished guests were the president of the Taipei Jewish Community, Don Shapiro, treasurer, Yoram Aharoni and Ohad Hirsch from the Jewish community in Taichung.

Chief Rabbi of Taiwan, Rabbi Ephraim Einhorn - who just turned 93 was the keynote speaker at the dinner. He spoke about the opening of the Center and the important role Rabbi Shlomi and his wife Rachel are filling in the small congregation of Taipei. He ended his speech and wished everyone a Shana Tovah. The ceremony concluded with a kosher dinner on the rooftop.

The Taipei Jewish Center, is located in the heart of the newly developed area of XinYi, and provides Jewish services for locals and overseas visitors. On Shabbat and festivals there are prayer services followed by

kosher meals.

Previously prayer services were held for many years in 5-star hotels including the Landis and the Ritz. These hotels did provide limited kosher food and other specific requirements.

Taipei finally now has a place where kosher food is available in its own centre. Demand has been steadily growing for many years from Jewish residents and travellers visiting the city.

Rabbi Shlomi, promised this is only the beginning of a bright Jewish future in Taiwan. Together with his wife they will do everything so that the Jewish residents and visitors, will have a true home for all their needs. For more information on Taipei Jewish Center Tel: 886-923923770

Jewish Times Asia
Issue October 2011

Shanghai Jews as seen by Chinese

Translated from Chinese by Huang

Jewish People in Shanghai for 138 years

In 1844, Elias David Sassoon, the second son of David Sassoon the founder of the family, entered Shanghai to expand the market. Jewish people immigration to Shanghai continued for more than a century. The total number of immigrants was more than 30,000, including 20,000 from Europe during the Second World War, because of the high pressure of the mad policy of destroying Jews by Hitler. Those Jews had no way out, so they chose to migrate to Shanghai because that was the only refuge where there was no need for a visa. With the support of Jews all over the world, and the help of the Chinese people and with their struggle, they survived from the tiger's mouth during the whole war. Shanghai developed as a city about 200 years ago. But it is sad that from the beginning, it became a colony or a semi-colony. In June 1842, Shanghai was bombarded and occupied by the British ship 'Nimitz'. Many Jews settled there, but, 95% of Jewish people entered Shanghai because of WWII to escape from Nazi Germany. There were three lots of Jews who immigrated to Shanghai. The first lot began arriving in 1844, mainly from Baghdad, Spain, Portugal and India. They were called 'Sephardim'. There were not so many, only about 700 until 1920. Most of the 'Sephardim' were rich. Shanghai was 'The Far East Trading Centre' and the 'elysium of adventure' for those who came to Shanghai for business and development. Most of those people lived near the business centre of the city. Very soon after they arrived in Shanghai, their outstanding ability showed. The remarkable examples are the Sassoons, Hardoons and Kadoories whose business grew

very rapidly and they got very strong economic base in a very short time. Hardoon was the king of property of Nanjing Street - the busiest shopping centre in Shanghai; the Shanghai Exhibition centre was the private park of the Hardoons. Sassoon was the Chairman of Shanghai Jewish financial groups - The Cathay Hotel (today the Peace or Heping Hotel) - was their office building. And today's Shanghai Children Palace was once Kadoorie's private house (Marble Hall). The Sephardim were respectable Jewish people. They played a very important role in Shanghai's city building, religion, social and economics; they also gave a great deal of help to the Jews who were kicked out by the Germans during WWII. However, it is not that every Sephardi was rich, some of them were staff, and 40% of the staff of Shanghai Stock Exchange was Sephardi at that time. The second lot was mainly Russian Jews. In 1906, because of the pogroms and the revolution, many Jews escaped from Russia to China. Many of them first stayed in Harbin - a city in the northern part of China. In 1931, the Japanese occupied the three North provinces of China, tried to build up the Man Zhou (Manchurian) country. The president of 'Man Zhou Real Way' Zhanchuan presented a plan to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to invite 50,000 German Jews to 'Manzhou.' Later, when a son of a rich Jewish businessman was kidnapped and killed, 70% of those Jews left Harbin for Shanghai. This issue broke the hope of building a protective area for Jews in Harbin. Until 1939, there were about 5000 Russian Jews in Shanghai. They were mostly ordinary

people; a few were soldiers or prisoners who escaped from Siberian exile. Their economic condition was lower than the Sephardi, mainly working in restaurants, coffee houses, bread houses, fashion shops and book shops. Also, some of them were engineers, lawyers or musicians. In the 1930's quite a lot of bus drivers were Jews. But few dealt with drug smuggling and had brothels. Some of the Russian Jews became middle class through hard struggle. The third lot was called 'Ashkenazim'. They came from Germany, Austria, Poland and other European countries between 1933 and 1941, since Hitler came to power. They were about 20,000 people. They came in three waves. The first was from 1933 to 1934, consisting of several thousand who were mostly well-educated. Many of them were doctors, musicians and professors. They mainly lived around Avenue Joffre (Xia Fei Street - today's Huaihai Street) in the French concession. As it was an unhurried migration they brought a lot of money with them, so they could start business immediately. Some dealt with small enterprises, some became doctors, some painters and some joined the city's band. The second wave was from August 1938 to August 1939 when 10,000 Jews came mainly from Austria and Germany. They escaped very quickly because of the famous 'Crystal Night.' They even had no time to pack, no chance of arranging a visa, with very simple parcels so they could catch the ship from Italy to Shanghai in a hurry. They reached Shanghai after four weeks of hardship. The last wave happened in 1939, when a few thousand Jews escaped from Poland as Germany attacked

there. They also did not bring many things with them and some brought one or two suitcases. The Jews who came from the last two waves mainly lived in a comparatively poor place - the 'Hongkou' district.

The well-known 'Crystal Night' happened on November 9, 1938. In France a young Polish Jew named Herschel Grynszpan became mad when he heard that his family was forced to move to the wild area on the border of Germany and Poland. He bought a gun, went to the German Embassy to kill the Ambassador. By mistake, he killed a third grade secretary Ernst von Rath. On hearing the news, the Germans used it as an excuse, so the promoted minister, Joseph Goebbels, announced the news of spontaneously punishing the Jews. Only on that night and the second day, at the German's instigation, a mob of about a thousand robbed and destroyed more than 7,000 shops and fired and damaged 191 synagogues.

On 12 November the government official ordered punishing all Jews because they had killed von Rath. The order was: 1. To punish all Jews by making them pay 1,000 million marks as a fine for wanting to emigrate, and that proof of payment of the fine had to be shown before approval was granted. 2. They themselves must pay for the damage of their losses, even though insurance had been paid. 3. Announcing a series of orders that the Jewish enterprise became 'alien', so that Jews would be expelled from Germany's economy. On the other hand, the head of the Gestapo, Himmler, gave an order to catch 20,000 rich Jews and send them into the concentration camp. In this way, they forced their families to pay a high price to buy their freedom.

Before 10 November 1938, although a lot of Jews had already migrated to other countries because they could not bear any more persecution of the Nazis, most Jews did not wish to leave the country for all sorts of reasons.

But on that day, when they heard that they did not belong anymore to the country they loved, everyone was frightened, especially when they heard that the Germans sent a great number of Jews into the camps and killed them with poison gas, then burnt their bodies in the furnace. Everyone became impatient to leave their home town. At that time, all visa offices were full of Jewish applicants; to them each earlier date of departing meant more possibility for surviving. However, at that time, more and more countries refused to accept Jewish people, except Palestine and the Dominican Republic. At last, the only hope left for the Jews was to go to Shanghai which is 7,000 miles away. At that time Shanghai was the only place in the world where no visa was needed. Thousands of Jews rushed into Shanghai one after another. 'Welcome to Shanghai! From now on, you are no longer German, Austrian, Czechoslovakian or Romanian. You are only Jews. The Jews around the world have already prepared a home for you here.' This is the very familiar address by the representative of the economic relief committee.

With the help from the Sassoons, Harpoons, Kadoories and all the other Jews in Shanghai and with the help from Shanghai people, the Jews who came to Shanghai earlier organized receptions in Shanghai. Harpoon's Riverside Building by the Suzhou River (Soochow Creek) was a big reception station. Whenever the exiled Jews reached Shanghai, they first went to do the 'check in' in that reception station. Living arrangements were according to their economic ability, health condition and age. Those who were better off economically lived mainly around Huaihai Street, Fushou Street and Nanking Street. Those who were less well off financially lived in the Hongkou District. The old, ill and poor refugees were housed in five reception centres.

In the following years, depending on their intelligence and business talent, Jews created miracles in those districts. The appearance of many streets became completely renovated along Hongkou - North of the Suzhou River. The Tangshan, Gongping, Changzhi, Huoshan and other streets became similar to European type; Zhoushan Road became the business centre of 'Little Vienna' type.

In other districts, Jews also built up successfully several hundreds of enterprises. According to local statistics, until 18 February 1943, 307 enterprises were forced to close and move to the isolated area by the Japanese Army. Those enterprises included 68 fabric stores, 50 coffee houses and restaurants, 26 economy shops, 24 groceries, 19 tailor shops, 14 book shops, 12 porcelain shops, 9 drug stores and factories, 9 electrical appliance shops, 8 leather shops, 7 jewellery shops and 61 other shops including shoe shops, photo studios, rubber factories etc. Those were only part of all the enterprises built up by Jewish people.

As some of the exiled Jews were teachers, editors, reporters, writers, painters, musicians and sportsmen, they became active as they settled down. They opened schools, organized playing teams, built up the moving library and they even started the band and football teams. It is worthwhile to mention that even under such hard conditions, the Jews unexpectedly published tens of newspapers and magazines.

Most of the Jews believed in religion. After they arrived in Shanghai, the Jews built up synagogues. There were four more comparatively famous synagogues, such as the 'Ohel Moshe Synagogue' was located at 62 Changyang Road. It was the activity centre of Jews in the Second World War.

In 1942, the Germans adopted the 'Final Solution' policy. Germans continuously pressured the Japanese to follow their example and

annihilate the Jews in Shanghai. However, during the Japanese/Russian War of 1904 to 1905, a well-known American Jewish banker used to loan a large amount of money to help the Japanese navy and also the army's losses on the battle front. Jews could be used as a bargaining chip, or they could make use of Jews to influence President Roosevelt.

The Japanese therefore adopted a comparatively 'soft' policy - to build up the first Jews 'isolation area' in Asia, and to guard it strictly. In February 1943, through Shanghai's broadcasting and newspaper, the Japanese announced that bulletin of establishing an 'isolation area for Jews.' According to the bulletin, since the date of issue until the 18 May, all refugees who had no nationality and lived in Shanghai had to move to the places fixed by the military police for security reasons.

Although the Japanese did not use the word 'Jews' in the bulletin, everyone knew that they meant Jews. In the following three months, about 1,000 Jewish families handed over 811 apartments, totaling 2,766 rooms which were owned by Jews. 307 enterprises were forced to close. All those Jews moved into rooms in the 'isolated area' which measured less than 2 sq. km, and the houses there were small and dirty. Their living condition deteriorated rapidly. Some even had to go begging on the street. Some went to work in Chinese

mills. Seven women registered for prostitution, and some women chose to cohabit to improve their living conditions. There were about 10 mothers who sold their own newborn babies. Often it happened that the children of the refugees used to pick up rubbish vegetables or fruits in the market. During those days, because of hunger and disease, 300 Jews refugees died. The 'foreigners' in Shanghai never had such hard times before.

The 'isolation area' lasted for 561 days. At last, it was cancelled because Nazi Germany lost and surrendered to the Russians and the Japanese army also surrendered without conditions on China's battlefields. During WWII, there were 20,000 Jews exiled to Shanghai from Germany, Austria, Poland and few from Czechoslovakia and Hungary, plus earlier Sephardim Jews and Russian Jews, totaling 31,000 Jews living in Shanghai.

Although the exiled Jews to Shanghai were in a very difficult situation, but through the help of charity organizations and Shanghai People, through their own effort, they overcame hard conditions and poverty, and survived. From 1939 to 1945, about 1,500 Jews died in Shanghai from poverty-stricken, hunger and diseases.

After WWII, the doors opened again for the Jews in the Middle East and Europe. The Jews who lived in Shanghai started to leave Shanghai

for Israel, USA, Canada, Australia and other countries. Until 1948, there were about 10,000 Jews still living in Shanghai. Since October 1949, the Chinese government started sending back the Jews to return to their home countries. In 1957, there were about only 100 Jews left in Shanghai. During the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution - the great disaster, they went away silently. In 1976, there were only about 10 Jews in Shanghai. The last Jewish old lady who was married to a Chinese, died in 1982. Hence, the 138 years' history of the Jewish community in Shanghai closed.

In July 1998, President Clinton of the US visited China. It was arranged that he visit the East Pearl Tower in Pudong - the new developing district. But Clinton preferred rather to see the 'Ohel Moshe Synagogue' located in No: 62 Changyang Street Hongkou district. This synagogue was built in 1927 by a Russian Jew; it was one of the four big Jewish Synagogues at that time. Today, this red small building is an office of Hongkou district management. As the special history of the house, the second floor is made into a small museum of Jewish people in Shanghai. The pictures on the wall tell people why Jewish people had taken Shanghai as their 'second home town'.

'China Bus' 12.11.98

Symposium on Monotheism and Postmodernism at Nanjing University

SJI International Board member Gustavo Perednik reports from Nanjing He participated in this Symposium which took place on June 14-17.

During June 14-17, Nanjing University, one of the most prestigious in China and the pioneer in Jewish Studies, held an International Symposium on

Monotheism and Postmodernism. More than thirty academics took part in the event, including guest speakers from Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan and the USA. The event was organized with Prof. Lihong Song as Deputy Director. Prof. Zhenhua Meng, associate professor at the Institute, was the main organizer of the event. Prof. Xu Xin's lecture on

"Universal Monotheism" opened the symposium, which was sponsored by the Exilarch's Foundation. During the second day two parallel sessions presented papers on diverse Jewish topics. The seminar concluded with a tour of the main Jewish sites in China.

Points East July 2011

Biggest human magen david set for world record attempt

A joint effort from a spectrum of members of the Hong Kong Jewish community achieved the 'Biggest Human Star' - a Magen David - Star of David, which is currently being verified as a Guinness World Record.

The adjudication team has received the application from Hong Kong. Entries into the Guinness World Record are conducted via the organisations website.

Two hundred and seventy seven people joined forces to break the Guinness World Record on 10 May at Discovery Bay College, Hong Kong. The day was to celebrate Israel's 63rd Independence Day which included many other activities making it a family fun-day.

Emanuelle Amar, Consul of Israel in Hong Kong, was responsible for organising the record attempt. According to Amar, the idea of the 'human star' and the Guinness World Record came up at a Parent Teachers

Association meeting when they were planning activities for the fun day. An event that would be appealing that could get everybody involved and that has a significant symbolic meaning. Similar record breaking events have taken place in the US.

Each year, Guinness World Record's receives well over 40,000 record claims, from over 80 countries. According to the regulations, two independent witnesses are required and the organisers made sure that they were present. These were Neil Morgan, General Manager of the Jewish Community Centre, and Tony McNicle, a teacher of the Carmel school and also a representative from an auditing company to verify the counting of participants.

Another critical regulation was that everyone had to stand still and together maintain the star-shape for ten minutes. It was a very hot day, but everyone was extremely enthusiastic and sang songs and forgot about the heat.

"I was sceptical at the beginning until I saw clearly a white human star was

formed. I am very proud of who we are," said Amar.

The 277 people participating beats the previous number of 250 people and complied with the rules of the Guinness World Record and the claim is now under official review.

"It has been a very joyful day for all the 400 people who came to take part or witness the event," added Amar.

The Guinness World Records office has confirmed the application and are in communication.

The organisation, headquartered in the UK, has been in operation for 55-years. It began with a simple question during a shooting party in 1951. Sir Hugh Beaver - then Managing Director of the Guinness Brewery in Ireland, asked a simple question: what was Europe's fastest game bird? No one knew the answer and that began the search for authoritative answers and thus the book of world records.

We will wait and see when it becomes official.

Jewish Times Asia - June 2011

INVITATION



The Board of Directors of Igud Yotzei Sin,
The Association of Former Residents of China in Israel
And the Israel-China Friendship Society

Are honored to invite you to the traditional Chanukah Reunion of Former Residents of China and the ceremony for the presentation of scholarships to students.

On Tuesday, 27 December 2011

At Mercaz Einav (Gan Ha'ir rooftop) 71 Ibn Gvirol Street, Tel Aviv. Doors will open at 5 PM for start of the reunion. Light refreshments will be served. Doors will close at 6 PM to begin the ceremony.

DONATIONS

SOCIAL AID FUND

USA

SAN FRANCISCO

THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE FAR EASTERN SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

From Mr. and Mrs. David FAMILIANT for the IYS Social Aid Fund US\$ 5.000

USA

From	Rabbi Marvin TOKAYER for the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund	US\$	1.000
"	Aya (nee Machlin) and Ray PIVO in honour of the birth of their granddaughter AHUVA-RACHEL	"	500
"	Dina VINCOW in memory of her parents Sophia Abramovna and Lev Moiseevich LICHOMANOV	"	250
"	Paul AGRAN in memory of his sister EDIT and two brothers JACK and ZALMAN	"	200
"	Esther and Paul AGRAN in honour of their granddaughter Stephanie V STRAUSS, who graduated from the University with the highest honours possible PHI BETA KAPPA SUMMA CUM LAUDE with DISTINCTION	"	100
"	Archie and Myrna OSSIN in honour of their niece Daphne SHAPIRO	"	150
"	Nadia EHRlich FINKELSTEIN in memory of Anatole and Henrietta OSSINOVSKY, her uncle and aunt	"	100
"	Seema ZIMMERMAN in memory of her dear parents Yehiel and Rosa RIFKIN	"	100
"	Esther BATES in memory of Martin (Bihovsky) BATES	"	50
"	Tania SALTER in memory of her mother Zina ROBINSON	"	18
"	Leopold BORODOVSKY in memory of his mother Nina BORODOVSKY	"	10
"	Bernhard KIEWE in memory of Albert BENSADOUN	"	10
"	Hanna BENSADOUN and family in memory of her husband Albert BENSADOUN, father and grandfather who passed away on Feb.13, 2011	"	25
"	George FRANKE in memory of A.IFLAND and wife SIMA	"	25
"	Liza (nee Mester) and Bernard GLUCKSMAN in memory of beloved Alla and Roman MESTER	"	36
"	Geoffrey, Rivka Sue and Miriam Minyi NEWMAN for IYS Social Aid Funs	"	36

In lieu of flowers

From	Sol BIRULIN	US\$	100	From	Joe MRANTZ	US\$	100
"	Bertha ELKIN	"	75	"	Matook R.NISSIM	"	100
"	Lena FRIEDEL-FELD	"	36	"	Nina SAPOSNICK	"	100
"	Raissa GOLDIN	"	36	"	Aron SLOUSTCHER	"	100
"	Anne HUDSON	"	100	"	Gina STEINBERG	"	200
"	Golda LAZAROVICH	"	100	"	Luba TUCK	"	180
"	Theodore LEVIN	"	30	"	Sophie VEINERMAN	"	50
"	Gary MATZDORFF	"	50	"	Frank and Trixie WACHSNER	"	50
"	Mariam MASE	"	25	"	Varda YORAN	"	200

CANADA

From	Frank and Nadia OGNISTOFF in lieu of flowers for Rosh-ha-Shana	US\$	100
"	Lily LIFSHITZ for the IYS Social Aid Fund	C\$	100

From	Jeannette POLOTSKY for the IYS Social Aid Fund	C\$	50
"	Lessy KIMMEL in memory of her beloved parents David and Lucy ASHKENAZI	"	100

HONG KONG

From	Mrs. Mary BLOCH for the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund	US\$	1.000
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ARGENTINA

From	Mrs. Gladys GOLDBERG in memory of her daughter Claudia Miriam GOLDBERG SAMSONOVITCH	NIS	700
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AUSTRALIA

From	Mr. & Mrs. Alexander SAMSON, PhD, for the IYS Social Aid Fund	US\$	200
"	Sam and Ada MOSHINSKY for the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	200
"	Lucy RAYHILL in memory of her husband Nathan (Norman) RAYHILL	AU\$	400
"	Harry TRIGUBOFF in memory of his brother Joseph TRAVERS	"	250
"	Sopha SAKKER in memory of her husband Mark SAKKER	"	50
"	Asya DEANE in memory of her parents Sarah and David FROUMSON	"	100
"	Roy and Gloria STEWART in memory of Gloria's dearest parents Solomon Davidovitch and Eugenia ZIMMERMAN	"	50
"	Aaron RODFELD in memory of his wife Sarah RODFELD	"	50
"	Ann RAHMAN in memory of her husband Aharon RAHMAN	"	50

In lieu of flowers

From	Dr. Solomon BARD	AU\$	210	From	Hannah STERN	AU\$	30
"	Vera KARLIKOFF	"	100	"	Jesse and Naomi TRACTON	"	220
"	Sopha SAKKER	"	50	"	George and Mary VORON	"	100
"	Olga SCHWARTZ	"	100				

ENGLAND

From	Alex FAIMAN in memory of his wife Audrey FAIMAN and parents Julius and Lucy FAIMAN	US\$	175
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ISRAEL

From	Giora and Ilana LESK in memory of Danny and Musia BERKOVITCH towards the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund	NIS	20.000
"	Zvi BERSHADSKY towards the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund	"	1.500
"	Inge and Kurt NUSSBAUM towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	1.000
"	the OFER family in memory of Michael KACHANOVSKY	"	1.000
"	Amram and Irmiyahu OLMERT towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	750
"	Michael FLEISCHMANN towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	500
"	Yehudit ORBACH MEHUDAR in memory of her grandparents Yosef and Dina IFLAND	"	1.000
"	Vladimir RESIN towards the IYS Social Aid Fund	"	1.000
"	Shulamit EVEN in honour of Teddy KAUFMAN's Birthday	"	180
"	Israel KARNY in memory of his parents Mina and Mark KRIMCHANSKY	"	600
"	Musia ROSENBLUM in memory of her son Shlomo ROSENBLUM	"	300
"	Leonfrid HEYMAN in memory of his beloved wife HENRIETTA	"	180
"	Esther VEINERMAN in memory of her mother Elena Abramovna SHMULEVSKY	"	200
"	Ran VEINERMAN in memory of his uncle Menashe VEINERMAN	"	200
"	Esther and Ran VEINERMAN in memory of a husband and father Albert VEINERMAN	"	100

From	Esther and Ran VEINERMAN in memory of a mother and grandmother Elena Abramovna SHMULEVSKY	NIS	100
"	Rita LEONOFF in memory of George LEONOFF	"	250
"	Nora BRODET in memory of George LEONOFF	"	250
"	Mira GOLDBERG in memory of her husband Mark GOLDBERG	"	100
"	Leah BECKER in memory of her mother Anna Borisovna ALTCLASS and family friend Shimon FUCHS	"	120
"	Shoshana ARAMA in memory of her mother Bella MIRKIN	"	200
"	Pesia AHARONI in memory of her mother Bella MIRKIN	"	100
"	Vera BEGUN in memory of her parents Haya Sarah and Mordehai BEGUN	"	200
"	Eva SHAFRAN in memory of her husband Boris SHAFRAN	"	100
"	Judith BAIN in memory of her mother Sopha KARLIK	"	180
"	Tema BLUM in memory of her parents Golda and Moshe ZANTLAUFER and her brother Alex PELEG	"	180

In lieu of flowers for the Rosh-ha-Shana

(Continued from the previous issue of the Bulletin)

From	Mr. & Mrs. A.ABRAHAM	NIS	100	From	Tamar and Shmuel KISLEV	NIS	150
"	Pesia AHARONI	"	200	"	Sima and Abraham KISLEV	"	300
"	Leah ALPER	"	150	"	Pnina and Yosef KLEIN	"	500
"	Shoshana ARAMA	"	200	"	Rita LEONOFF	"	250
"	Sopha ASHKENAZI	"	200	"	Baruch LEVITIN	"	120
"	Israel BARANOVSKY	"	200	"	Joe LEVOFF	"	200
"	Abraham BARANOVSKY	"	200	"	Timna LILACH	"	300
"	Vera BEGUN	"	150	"	Celia MAIMANN	"	150
"	Pnina and Bobby BERSHADSKY	"	200	"	Dina and Moshe MAROM	"	100
"	Maurice BEYAR	"	250	"	Boris MATLIN	"	60
"	Yosef BOMASH	"	180	"	Celia PAYAS	"	200
"	Nora BRODET	"	250	"	Edward PELOV	"	500
"	Hasya and Hezkeyahu DVIR	"	100	"	Tania PRISH	"	120
"	Michael FLEISCHMANN	"	500	"	Sima REICHER	"	200
"	Flora and Bob FREIMAN	"	500	"	Serafima RIBINICK	"	200
"	Reva FREIMAN	"	360	"	Nadia and Zeev ROBINSON	"	500
"	Vivi FRENKEL	"	180	"	Carmela ROSEN	"	150
"	Zelda FRIEDMAN	"	500	"	Alter ROSENBLUM	"	150
"	Mark and Sarah GENDLIN	"	100	"	Judith and Israel SANDEL	"	250
"	Inna GLOBIN	"	250	"	Clara SCHWARTZBERG	"	400
"	David GOOTMAN	"	200	"	Renata SHANY	"	360
"	Daphne GURI BEN GERA	"	100	"	Rina SHARON	"	250
"	Yair HENDEL	"	300	"	Tania and Eddie SHEINGEIT	"	150
"	Leonfrid HEYMAN	"	100	"	Carmela SOKOLOVER	"	150
"	Riva HOFFMANN	"	100	"	Pnina TRAYBER	"	150
"	Yosef JACOBSON	"	100	"	Aviva and Gershon ZALTSMAN	"	150
"	Luba KATZ	"	100				

SYNAGOGUE FUND

CANADA

From	Allan RAYSON in memory of his parents Danil and Fania RESNIKOV, and his relatives Rachel KANT and Esther YUDOVICH on their Yohrzeit dates	C\$	500
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ISRAEL

From	Clara SCHWARTZBERG in memory of her husband Benjamin SCHWARTZBERG	NIS	400
"	Shmuel and Tamar KISLEV in memory of Rabbi Aaron Moshe KISELEV	"	150

From	Luba TSINMAN towards the Synagogue Fund for Rosh-ha-Shana	NIS	500
"	Luba TSINMAN in memory of her dear sister Hannah WEINBERGER	"	200
"	Luba TSINMAN in memory of her dear brother Kalman SLUTSKER	"	200
"	Esther GINANSKY in memory of Mary BEYAR and Riva BEIM	"	200
"	Galina RECHES in memory of her husband Haim RECHES	"	100
"	Shulamit EVEN in memory of her parents Sarah and Mark MORGULEV	"	360
"	Esther KATZ in memory of her brother Menachem BASIN	"	100
"	Yehuda SEMBERG in memory of his parents Sonia and Ilya (Ilyusha) SEMBERG	"	180
"	Leah ALPER in memory of her brother Benjamin LITVIN	"	180
"	Riva HOFFMANN in memory of her father Itzhak SOKOL	"	100
"	Judith MAROM in memory of her mother Rachel PERSOFF and aunt Sophie FUCHS	"	200
"	Esther YARHO in memory of her parents Iza (4th Yahrzeit) and Aharon (13th Yahrzeit) YARHO, and in memory of her grandparents Esther (70th Yahrzeit) and Avraham (53th Yahrzeit) YARHO, and Enya and Michael KONDAKOFF	"	360
"	Esther YARHO in memory of her aunt Luba BRUNNER (2st Yahrzeit)	"	100
"	Israel ROSENBLAT in memory of his father Moshe ROSENBLAT	"	180
"	Raphael LUDIN in memory of his father Haim LUDIN	"	100
"	Isabel SHARON in memory of her parents Gavriel (Gava) and Rosetta RABINOVICH	"	180

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

USA

SAN FRANCISCO

THROUGH THE COURTESY OF THE FAR EASTERN SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

From	The ALEXANDER M. and JUNE L. MAISIN FOUNDATION of the JEWISH COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND for Igud Yotzei Sin in Israel, the Association of Former Residents of China, to provide the Scholarship Awards in Israel to the grandchildren and other descendants of former residents of China in Israel (The Scholarship Fund in memory of Alexander and June MAISIN)	US\$	30.000
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USA

From	Matook NISSIM towards the Scholarship Fund in memory of Jacob GURI	US\$	1.000
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AUSTRALIA

In everlasting loving memory of dearest YASHA and ANECHKA.
Our life will never be the same without you

From Lika KAGANER and the whole family towards
the Scholarship Fund in memory of Yasha KAGANER
AU\$ 500

ISRAEL

From	Sarah UMANSKY towards the Scholarship Fund in memory of Gary UMANSKY	NIS	5.000
"	Shlomo NIV towards the Scholarship Fund in memory of Hirsh NIV	"	1.000
"	Arie TANDET and Miriam YAKIR towards the Scholarship Fund in memory of Lika and Milia TANDET	"	1.800

In Memoriam

Jack Guri

Jackie was born in 1923 in the international settlement in Shanghai to his parents Regina (nee Levy) and John Goldenberg. He was educated under the British system, and throughout his days at school he was involved in a lot of sports activity which included rugby football cricket, and later on in rowing. He played bridge- a game he kept playing right to the end of his life. He took sports seriously - not once did he end a rugby game with fractured ribs or a broken nose.

Jackie fitted well into the British community but never lost his Jewish identity.

He studied accountancy and worked for Lowe, Bingham and Mathews.

He volunteered in the Shanghai Municipal Council volunteer corps, belonging to the armoured car corps using WWI vehicles to help the

police in emergency cases.

Not having enemy papers, he was not interned by the Japanese during the war.

With the beginning of the struggle in Palestine after the war, he became interested in what was happening across the ocean and kept himself updated with the news from Palestine. When the War of Independence began and the situation in Shanghai had no future he decided on migration to Palestine to help in the battle for the Jewish state. Although he arrived towards the end of the war - he joined the IDF tanks corps and became involved in the Israeli community.

In 1956 he met and married Devorah Lunz whom he had met at a picnic on the Dor (Tantura) beach. Devorah was born in Safed from a family well-rooted in Palestine. Her mother was born in Zichron Yaakov into one of

the founding families and her father was born in Jerusalem into one of the first families to leave the city walls and to settle outside them. They had three children, Dan, Daphna and Doron. Jackie made his home in Haifa. He was active in the community and kept active in sports as a part of life - rowing well into his 70's and also taking long walks daily. He took up gardening and became an expert in growing roses.

When the Sephardi Division of Igud Yotzei Sin was established about fifteen years ago, Jackie was unanimously elected as its Chairman and took part in all its activities. During the past eight years he and Devorah have lived in the Protea Village retirement home near Tel Mond where he became well known among the community. He passed away in August 2011. May his memory be blessed!

Donation

US\$ 5.000

to the Misha KOGAN Social Aid Fund

In loving memory of

Yuli OFER

From Asya KOGAN and family

Tokyo,
September, 2011

We mourn deeply the passing of our dearest mother,
grandmother and great grandmother

Zena SHVETZ

There are not enough words for how much you were loved.
You will continue to be an inspiration to all of us.
Your spirit, love for art and life, your warmth and humanity
will always be with us.

Sam and Janie SHVETZ
Lucia and Irwin SMIGEL
Bellanca , Mitch, Russell, Erik, and Aaron RUTTER
Robert ,Michelle, Daniel, Ethan and Roey SMIGEL

Bella RECTOR is greatly saddened by the passing away
of her childhood friend and sister-in-law

Zena SHVETZ

Fred RECTOR and Didi PETERSEN and their families mourn the loss
of their dear aunt and great-aunt

We miss her

In loving memory of

Zena SHVETZ

a loving and caring sister-in-law, and aunt

Eda SHVETZ
Jeannette BRANDON
Fred SHVETZ

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of our long time friend

Zena SHVETZ

and extends deepest sympathy to her entire family

We are mourning

Niussia HANIN

(born to Alexander and Nadiezda Madorsky in Harbin, China)
who studied chemistry and pharmacology at the University of Bologna (Italy)
and graduated in 1938.

Nussia returned to Tientsin and married David Hanin.
They had two children, Nadia and Shura (named after her parents,
Alexander and Nadiezda), and moved to Israel around 1950.
She was a professional pharmacist, loving wife, mother, cousin, and
grandmother, and a wonderful, intelligent, kind woman.

We miss and will always remember her.

Cousins Lia MADORSKY (Florence, Italy), Nadine MAY,
Ruth MAGINNIS (San Francisco, CA) and their families

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of

Mara BRODSKY

and extends heartfelt sympathy to her entire family

We mourn the loss of our dear cousin

Meir GINANSKY

after a long illness and extend our deepest condolences
to ETTIE, SHMULIK, TALI and children
May his memory be for a blessing.

Dora and Gabe LEE

Ronnie, Helene, Jessica

Dorel, Stuart, Elui and Ari

Michael, Michelle, Ashley and Matthew
Lili and Jon DILLON and family

Greatly saddened to hear of the passing of

Meir GINANSKY

My heartfelt sympathy and condolences to his wife ESTHER
and the entire family

Joe MRANTZ

It is with great sorrow we mourn the passing away
of our very dear friend

Meir GINANSKY

and send heartfelt condolences to dearest ETTIE and family

Rasha and Teddy KAUFMAN

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of

Meir GINANSKY

and extends heartfelt sympathy to ETTIE and the entire family

Lily and Zvi KOROSHI are deeply saddened by the passing away of our friend

Meir GINANSKY

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and love to his beloved wife ETTIE,
son SHMULIK and the rest of the family

My deepest sympathy to ETTIE and family on the loss of her husband,
father and grandfather

Meir GINANSKY

Mira MRANTZ

Our heartfelt condolences to ETTIE on the loss of her husband

Meir GINANSKY

Inna HANUKAEV
Cecilia LYUBMAN

Valery LADIJENSKY
Nelly STEINBERG

With deep sorrow I mourn the death of

Jackie GURI (GOLDENBERG)

My longtime friend from Shanghai, where we both spent our fortunate years.
I wish to express my heartfelt condolences to his loving family.

Abe FRADKIN

With grief and sorrow I mourn the passing of my beloved brother

Bobby RABINOVICH (Boaz ATZMON)

on November 1st, 2011

and extend condolences to MICHAL and all her family

May he rest in peace

Sister: Isabel SHARON

Nephew: JOHNNY and family

Nephew: RANDY and family

Our deepest regrets on the passing away of my dear cousin

B O B B Y

Ilana HERMAN (nee Rabinovich) & family

In memory of a childhood spent together we mourn
with ISABEL and MICHAL the death of a wonderful man

Bobby RABINOVICH (Boaz ATZMON)

Dora and Joe WAINER

Rasha and Teddy KAUFMAN

Bella and Avram GOLDREICH

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of

Bobby RABINOVICH (Boaz ATZMON)

and extends heartfelt condolences to his entire family

We mourn the loss of dear

M I R A

and send deepest condolences to BELLA and all her family

Dora and Joe WAINER and family
Celia and Sunnia WAINER and family

To dearest BELLOCHKA, AVI and family
Please accept our heartfelt condolences on the tragic untimely passing of dear

MIROCHKA

Lily LIFSHITZ,
ESTHER, LOU and family

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of

Mira SHNEIDER (nee Chernomorsky)

and extends heartfelt sympathy to her entire family

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of

Teddy ABRAMOV

and extends heartfelt sympathy to his entire family

The BOARD of DIRECTORS of IGUD YOTZEI SIN
mourns the passing away of our dear friend

Monia NITZAN (NEMCHENKO)

and extends heartfelt condolences to his family

אנו משתתפים בצערם הרב של סוזי וילדיה צבי'קה וליך וב"ב
עם פטירת אמה וסבתם האהובה

מרה ברודסקי ז"ל

מי יתן ולא תדעו עוד צער

שלוה ברודסקי
חדוה ישראלי וב"ב
דליה צאיג וב"ב

Rabbi Kook in Nanjing

By ELI KAVON

The story of Jewish Studies in China is just beginning

I STEPPED ONTO CHINESE SOIL AT PUDONG International Airport in Shanghai after a journey of 20 hours from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I did not know what to expect, never having traveled to the Peoples' Republic before. The next day the high-speed bullet train got me to Nanjing. But what I discovered in a week in that city revealed much about the transformation of China - a transformation not just about an economic boom but about the intellect, culture and spirit of the country itself. Meet Hannah, Yona and Esther. They are doctoral students in Jewish Studies at prestigious universities. Their interests range from theology in the "Book of Job" to the Holocaust to the philosophy of Martin Buber. These students are the future leaders of their society - they take their studies seriously and with a dedication that is rare. Hannah, Yona, and Esther are not students at Columbia University, Oxford, or Hebrew University. They are not American Jews or Israelis. They are not the children of Western businessmen working in China. They are not Jewish. They are Chinese. I met these doctoral students at an academic conference this summer at Nanjing University. Professor Xu Xin, the charismatic and tenacious driving force behind Jewish Studies in China, had invited me to present a scholarly paper at an "International Symposium on Monotheism and Postmodernism." The Nanjing University professor attended two of my classes at Wynmoor - a retirement condo community in South Florida - while on a visit to the United States to conduct research. Most of what I had known of Judaism in China concerned the medieval Jewish community of Kaifeng - it disappeared long ago - and the modern Jewish refugees from Hitler, who settled in Shanghai.

After hearing Xu Xin speak at Wynmoor, I also understood that most people in China associated Jews with economic success, wealth, and a high degree of intelligence. The three-day symposium in Nanjing was a revelation. Not only was I impressed by the presentations of professors from Japan, the US, Canada, Israel, and Australia, but I was utterly intrigued by the passion of Chinese professors and doctoral students to understand monotheism and integrate it into their own lives and their worldview. They remain rooted in their Chinese identity yet confront a history and theology of which their countrymen know little. They are the future of Jewish Studies in China and they will strengthen their country's commitment to understanding the unique and universal history of the State of Israel. While my presentation was one of the few at the symposium that focused on Zionism - part of the presentation was a discussion of the messianic idea in the thought of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the most influential and profound thinker in the realm of religious Zionism - I am hoping that more of the students from Nanjing, Hong Kong and Beijing will delve into the importance of the Jewish State from a theological and historical perspective. Jeremiah (a.k.a. Zhenhua Meng), the professor who organized the logistics for the symposium, speaks fluent Hebrew - better than my own, despite the fact that I completed the Hebrew ulpan at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem with flying colors. In a wider world where Zionism is condemned by intellectuals and academics, this professor's experiences in Israel and his Hebrew fluency are rays of light in the darkness. The site of the conference is of great significance. In the years leading up to World War II, Japanese forces occupied Nanjing, murdering 200,000

Chinese civilians and raping 20,000 women, including 11-year-old girls. The Chinese, however, refused to be broken, not allowing millennia of history and civilization to succumb to racist conquerors. The Jewish will to survive in the face of Nazi genocide is certainly a facet of our history with which the Chinese people can identify. Just as the Chinese faced discrimination and condescension from Western colonialists, so did Jews emancipated in Europe face some of the same forms of belittling their religion and culture. Both ancient civilizations had to confront modernity and adapt to a rapidly changing world without sacrificing pride in their past. As the founding director of the Glazer Institute for Jewish Studies at Nanjing University, Xu Xin has embarked on an important and historic mission. As China emerges as a global economic powerhouse and attempts to open up to the West, Chinese understanding of the nature of monotheism and its roots in Judaism is growing even more urgent and important than in the past. Abraham's calling of more than 3,000 years ago remains a relevant force in the life of Jews and non-Jews around the world. The story of Jewish Studies in China is just beginning. The implications of Chinese doctoral students who added Hannah, Yona and Esther to the names of their birth - and whose dedication to their intellectual and spiritual life can be found, in part, in their devotion to Jewish Studies - are staggering. One billion people cannot be ignored - nor can they afford to ignore an ancient yet still potent idea that has sparked and fostered civilizations. Eli Kavon is on the faculty of Nova Southeastern University's Lifelong Learning Institute in Davie, Florida.

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50 Years - 1961 - 2011

Synagogue in Memory of the Jewish Communities in China



Front View of Synagogue



Cultural Center - 1st Floor



View of Prayer Hall



View of Holy Ark



Memorial Plaque



Synagogue Main Entrance

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY TO SHANGHAI

Flori Cohen



On the grounds of our home on 430 Seymour Road



My sister Esther (left) and myself standing by the Lion at the entrance to the Bank of China



In front of the Ark in the Ohel Rachel Synagogue